

A Post-School Outcome Study of Students with Learning Disabilities

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Dedication

To my husband, Mitchell Queener.

Your love and support in this endeavor conquered all.

Thank you for taking me to class, reviewing my papers, and for simply being there.

Thanks for holding my hand in this journey.

I love you.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

A Post-School Outcome Study of Students with Learning Disabilities

The transition to adulthood for students with learning disabilities is not a single life event; rather it is a series of smaller steps that lead students to become independent adults. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 and its regulations required states to deliver transition services as well as follow-up with students who had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) within one year of graduating or exiting from high school. States are required to report on student's postsecondary outcomes to the U.S. Department of Education within one year of graduating or leaving high school.

This study followed-up with former students with learning disabilities who participated in a tiered transition program that focused on career development at the Kingsbury Center in Washington, DC. The follow-up study was conducted to (a) report on former student postsecondary outcomes (e.g., education, employment, and independent living), (b) gain insight regarding levels of satisfaction, and (c) receive feedback regarding the Kingsbury Transition Program (KTP) and the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.). There were 56 former students who were invited to participate in the study. A total of 16 former students was interviewed that yielded a 29% response rate. Former students were interviewed within three to five years since leaving or graduating from high school. The interview protocol consisted of questions originally developed by the National Post-School Outcomes Center. A revised interview protocol was used to interview former students after three rounds of expert review and a pilot test to achieve content validity.

The data indicated that students with learning disabilities (a) are going to college and working part-time, (b) are currently or have been employed, (c) continue to live with their parents with a few students living on or off campus, (d) are satisfied with their lives, and (e) think that the KTP/C.I.T.Y. Program helped them work toward their postsecondary goals. The student interviews did highlight some areas of concern: transition program issues, overemphasis on a college pathway, length of time to obtain postsecondary degree, disclosure, adult services, and employee benefits. Recommendations and limitations of the study were addressed to help future students transition into adult life.

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Chapter One: Research Problem

Overview of Research Problem

Transition to adulthood is not always easy for young adults as they leave high school to pursue postsecondary goals. Research has shown that the trajectory for a young person to become an adult takes longer to achieve, especially in this continued economic downturn (Furstenberg, 2010; Settersten & Ray, 2010). The transition to adulthood is considered to be "...drawn out over a span of nearly a decade and consists of a series of smaller steps rather than a single swift and coordinated one" (Berlin, Furstenberg, & Waters, 2010, p. 4).

The MacArthur Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood provided questions on adult transitions in the 2002 General Social Survey that generated an opinion poll to a nationally representative sample of 1,400 Americans (Settersten & Ray, 2010). The results found that approximately 95% of adults consider these areas to be indicators of young people embracing adulthood: "...completing school, establishing an independent household, and being employed full-time" (General Social Surveys, 2002; Settersten & Ray, 2010, p. 22). Therefore, receiving educational and employment opportunities is critical for young adults to achieve economic independence and support themselves and their families. For students with disabilities, the transition from high school to the postsecondary world of employment, education, and independent living is often fraught with challenges. The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up study evaluating postsecondary outcomes of former participants with learning disabilities (LD)

who have participated in a transition program at the Kingsbury Center in Washington, DC.

Introduction

Prior to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA 2004), several follow-along and follow-up studies were conducted on youth with LD on post-school outcomes. Follow-along studies are longitudinal studies that collect data on postsecondary outcomes of youth at multiple points in time (Halpern, 1990). Follow-along studies are prospective, meaning that predictor information is collected initially and postsecondary outcome information is acquired at later points in time (Halpern, 1990). Follow-up studies are cross-sectional, meaning data on postsecondary outcomes of young adults with LD are collected at one point in time (Halpern, 1990). Follow-up studies are retrospective, meaning predictor information on postsecondary outcomes is collected at the same time as the outcome information (Halpern, 1990).

Postsecondary outcomes explore three specific areas: educational, employment, and independent living outcomes. Since the reauthorization of IDEA 2004, states are required to develop a six-year state performance plan that focuses on 20 indicators. There are four indicators that relate to the transition of youth with disabilities:

- Indicator 1: requires states to report the high school graduation rate of youth with Individual Education Programs (IEP) that graduate with a regular high school diploma;
- Indicator 2: requires states to report the dropout rate of youth with IEPs in high school;

- Indicator 13: focuses on measurable annual IEP goals and transition services in relating to students' postsecondary goals; and
- Indicator 14: calls for states to examine their statewide transition services and postsecondary outcomes (e.g., higher education and competitive employment). Indicator 14 requires all states to conduct a one-year post-school follow-up study on youth who have exited from high school. If a district has more than 50,000 students, they are required to conduct a follow-up study every five years.

Accountability from schools is required under IDEA guidelines. The underlying question is do transition services and IEP goals directly impact postsecondary outcomes for LD?

This study focused on Indicator 14 in one school within the greater DC metro area.

In the 11 years since the initial passing of IDEA 2004, post-school outcome studies have been conducted across the country in several states to determine postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. The IDEA 2004, through Indicator 14, has required states to follow up with students with disabilities who had an IEP, within one year of leaving high school. The National Post-School Outcomes (NPSO) Center examined post-school outcomes from the Annual Performance Reports (APRs) of 50 states, nine territories, and the District of Columbia (NPSO, 2013). The majority of states (n=52) used a survey to conduct follow-up outcomes (NPSO, 2013). In evaluating the 2011 data, the NPSO found the “median percent of youth” enrolled in higher education (27%), enrolled in higher education plus competitively employed (59%), and enrolled in higher education plus competitively employed as well as some other postsecondary education or training program and/or some other employment (74%) (NPSO, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

There are approximately 2.3 million students with LD enrolled for special education services in school systems across the country (NCES, 2014). IDEA 2004 identifies a specific learning disability as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. (34 CFR 300.8 (c) (10))

Ideally, as students mature and graduate, students will seamlessly transition from high school to their postsecondary environment. As noted earlier, transition to the postsecondary environment for students is not a single life event. Rather it is a series of smaller steps that lead students to becoming independent adults. For any student, transitioning to the postsecondary environment is challenging on multiple levels. These young adults are faced with challenges related to balancing school and work with newfound independence. Students with LD face additional challenges in navigating the world of work and college because the law changes from “entitlement” to “eligibility” for services based on documentation of a disability.

On average, from 2003 to 2012, about 63% of young adults with LD graduated from high school with a regular diploma (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Young adults with LD who exit high school are not always asked to report their post-school outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Therefore, transition personnel and special educators do not know if young adults with

LD are working towards their postsecondary goals as outlined initially in their IEP. The postsecondary goals and services outlined in IEPs are designed to prepare students to transition from high school to postsecondary environment by addressing each of these three components (e.g., employment, education, and independent living).

Postsecondary Environment

At the national level, youth with disabilities face barriers in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. A summary of the national picture of youth with LD is presented below:

- **Employment:** Young adults with LD are attaining full-time and part-time employment alongside their peers without disabilities. However, research data indicate that young adults with LD change jobs frequently and stay on the job for an average of 10 months. Most youth with LD are initially obtaining employment in the service industry career cluster (e.g., food service and retail) (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010).
- **Postsecondary Education:** Young adults with LD are tracked into three types of schools: career technical education, two-year institutions, and four-year institutions. Most youth with LD are enrolled in two-year institutions over career technical education and four-year institutions (Newman et al., 2010).
- **Independent Living:** Young adults with LD report high levels of satisfaction in their living arrangements and social and community life. Young adults with LD who live independently report higher levels of satisfaction (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009).

In 2013, states (50) and the District of Columbia collected data on post-school outcomes focusing on competitive employment and postsecondary education (NPSO, 2013). The Commonwealth of Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia were included in evaluating post-school outcomes. These states and the District were identified because the study followed up with students who participated in a transition program at the Kingsbury Center in the District of Columbia. The Kingsbury Center accepts students from Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. According to the 2007 State Performance Plans (SPP), the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) coordinates with the NPSO Center (District of Columbia, 2007). On the local level, tracking post-school outcome data on employment, education, and independent living for youth with LD is a major problem in the District of Columbia. The DCPS system does not collect data on independent living, and, Indicator 14 does not require states to collect data on independent living. The DCPS does not require non public schools to report the post-school outcomes data.

In 2010, a Chancellor's Community Forum led by Michelle Rhee was conducted to address the issues of DCPS students who attended non public schools. The Forum highlighted how the transition for student with disabilities needed to be addressed in DCPS. There were several issues identified that posed problems to assisting the transition of students with disabilities in Washington, DC: (1) lack of transition plans for DCPS students (2) lack of communication between high schools and postsecondary institutions in the region and (3) lack of coordination or collaboration between DCPS and Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) (DCPS, 2010). There are a variety of reasons why Indicator 14 continues to be a struggle for DCPS to collect the data, such as

not having the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) until 2007, lack of transition plans highlighting postsecondary goals, and lack of professional development opportunities provided to special education personnel (Shah, 2012).

The table (see Table 1) provides an overview of the results that have been collected in the last eight years on Indicator 14 within DCPS. Table 1 is divided by year, targeted goals, actual results, and LD results. For each school year, there is a targeted number in which DCPS anticipates that students will be competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both within one year of leaving high school. The third column reports the actual results on postsecondary outcomes of all recent high school graduates with disabilities collected by DCPS. The last column highlights the percentage of recent graduates with LD who have become competitively employed, enrolled in postsecondary education institution, and/or have achieved both. This table substantiates the need for following up with students with learning disabilities for the purpose of learning how they are faring in the postsecondary environment.

Table 1

Indicator 14 Goals and Results in District of Columbia Public Schools

Year	Targeted Goals	Actual Results	LD Results
2005-2006	56% of students with disabilities will be competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both within one year of leaving high school	No actual data reported	None
2006-2007	60% of students with disabilities will be competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both within one year of leaving	No actual data reported	None

	high school		
2007-2008 (Baseline)	60% of students with disabilities will be competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both within one year of leaving high school	76% Engaged 25% Competitively employed only 27% Postsecondary School only 25% Both Response Rate: 35%	85% Engaged 16% Competitively employed only 32% Postsecondary only 36% Both Response Rate: 42%
2008-2009	States not required to report on Indicator 14	No Data Reported	No Data Reported
2009-2010 (New Baseline)		Reporting FFY 2008-2009 23% Higher Education 8% Other type of postsecondary education or training 22% Competitive Employment 2% Some other type of employment Response Rate: 25%	60% students with LD are engaged
2011-2012	26% enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school 49% enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school 61% enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or	35% enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school 56% enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school 68% enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary	75% students with LD are engaged in some postsecondary activity

	competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school	education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school	
		Response Rate: 23%	

(Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), 2005-2012)

Major causes on the local level appear to be a breakdown of communication, consistency, and technical assistance OSSE and each Local Education Agency (LEA). Each charter school is considered to be its own LEA and independent from DCPS. Private schools are independent from DCPS system, but they are not considered to be an LEA. Private schools that specialize in special education receive funding from DCPS to teach and provide services to students with disabilities who live in a zone to attend a DCPS school. A report on service delivery in special education in Washington, DC highlighted how high personnel turnover in school leadership was consistent throughout the last eight years within the respective LEAs (American Institutes for Research, 2013). Therefore, a lack of communication and technical assistance among OSSE, DCPS, and LEAs may have contributed to the loss of data records and the creation of new baseline data throughout 2005-2012. OSSE and LEAs struggled to achieve consistency in reporting their post-school outcome data and Transition IEP goals. In the APR FFY 2011, OSSE reported challenges in obtaining the most recent student contact information (OSSE, 2013). OSSE has to communicate and collaborate with the LEAs about collecting student information in order to accurately follow-up with students after exiting high school (OSSE, 2013). OSSE has sought assistance from the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) to assist the LEAs in delivering best

practices in transition services as well as in collecting data required by IDEA 2004 for Indicator 14 (OSSE, 2014).

Table 1 illustrates how Indicator 14 is not consistently being reported and determining how youth with LD are faring upon graduation/exit from high school. National data provide more specific information on the type of postsecondary education, employment, and living arrangements that youth with LD encounter upon graduation, such as the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2. In the 2009-2010 reports on IDEA indicators, DCPS reported on new baseline data that provided information on young adults with LD by their levels of engagement in employment and postsecondary education (see Table 1) (District of Columbia, 2010). By only measuring levels of engagement once a student has graduated or exited the system, the data provides only a glimpse into how young adults with LD are achieving success. The NPSO Center (2011) encourages states to consider other factors in evaluating postsecondary education outcomes besides enrollment, such as the types of postsecondary institutions (e.g., career/technical, two-year, and four-year) attended and the level of accommodations/supports at those institutions. Indicator 14 requires that states determine if young adults with disabilities are competitively employed (NPSO, 2011). Employment outcomes can be evaluated beyond simply being employed, such as types of employment, hours per week, wages and benefits, job accommodations, and job satisfaction (NPSO, 2011).

DCPS, Kingsbury, and the Transition Program

Kingsbury Center, a private school in the District of Columbia, has recognized the importance of following up on young adults with LD. The Kingsbury Center provided the

researcher with the opportunity to conduct a follow-up study on their students. The Kingsbury Center is a K-12 school that serves students with LD. A majority of the students at the high school level are referred by DCPS. Kingsbury implemented a four-year transition program that provided students with community-based career exploration opportunities. Similar to DCPS, the Kingsbury Center recognized the importance of following up with students but had not had the opportunity to collect post-school outcome data on its graduates. This study used a survey to collect post-school outcome data consistent with the federal requirements. This research provided a data collection “system” that can be used by future transition coordinators at Kingsbury on graduates with LD to determine their post-school outcomes.

In DCPS and Kingsbury, post-school outcome data needed to be collected to better serve youth with LD in the community. DCPS and Kingsbury did not have specific data on post-school outcomes on youth with disabilities. The lack of information of post-school outcomes can cost the school time and money in delivering effective transition services and preparing youth with LD for the postsecondary environment. Each year that no data was collected, potential lessons that could be passed on to youth, families, and the school community were lost. If there is no relationship between the IEP goals and the postsecondary environment, one could assume there is a gap in the delivery of transition services and preparation for the adult world. The U.S. Department of Education shared that DCPS had only 7% of postsecondary goals outlined in IEPs (Shah, 2012). According to the SPP report (District of Columbia, 2009), the District has consistently restructured the way it obtains results on young adults with disabilities. Due to constant restructuring, the data became “new baseline” data every other year.

Several promising strategies and resources have been developed to address the problem of collecting data on Indicator 14. These strategies and resources are applicable for all youth with disabilities, including LD. For Indicator 14, some states coordinate with the NPSO Center to coordinate and develop reliable and valid data collection tools to determine post-school outcome data on youth with disabilities. As stated earlier, the NPSO Center evaluates data from several states and the District. States that do not coordinate with the NPSO Center develop their own data collection system and methods of interpreting exit data on youth with disabilities. DCPS does coordinate with the NPSO Center and the Potsdam Institute for Applied Research (PIAR) to fulfill the Indicator 14 requirements. In addition to the collaboration with NPSO Center and PIAR, OSSE has created a Transition Community of Practice as well as provided technical assistance on transition and dropout prevention trainings to effectively target Indicator 14. At this time, the Kingsbury Center has not collected data for Indicator 14 on post-school outcomes on youth with LD.

The barriers that prevent DCPS and Kingsbury from meeting their obligations under IDEA 2004 are different due to the nature and scope of the built-in infrastructure. DCPS continues to build data collection infrastructure with the LEAs while struggling to meet compliance for Indicator 14. The Kingsbury Center has built in a comprehensive four-year transition program in ninth through 12th grade that intends to meet transition best practices. The focus of this research was to implement a follow-up study on students that have exited from the Kingsbury Center and who participated in the Kingsbury Transition Program (KTP). In addition to providing baseline data, the survey instrument that was utilized provided a foundation for collecting post-school outcome data and can

continue to serve as a model for private service providers to collect for Indicator 14 in each succeeding year. This model is consistent with what is required by the federal government in collecting data for Indicators 14 in all states and districts.

Based on research in the field and consideration of barriers and experience, the most promising approach was to examine strategies that other states have taken to collect data on Indicator 14 locally and nationally for private service providers. The researcher selected a post-school outcomes instrument to gather post-school outcome data. Data collection procedures that were developed through the course of this research were provided to the Kingsbury Center to enable it to collect postsecondary outcomes on future graduating classes. As a result, the Kingsbury Center will be able to have a better idea of the strengths and challenges of its transition program in meeting the needs of the students as well as effectively preparing them for the postsecondary environment.

The KTP provides ongoing transition assessment to drive the career exploration and community-based instruction for youth with LD. The purpose is to create individualized career and work experiences for youth with LD based on their interests, skills, and preferences. The Kingsbury Center developed a model transition program for ninth through 12th graders. This was a follow-up study that targeted students who had participated in a comprehensive assessment-driven transition program and have exited from the Kingsbury Center. The transition curriculum consisted of the following semester courses (see Figure 1):

- 9th grade—**Personal Awareness**
 - Personal Awareness was an introduction to three central themes of self: self-awareness (strengths, needs, and preferences), self-determination

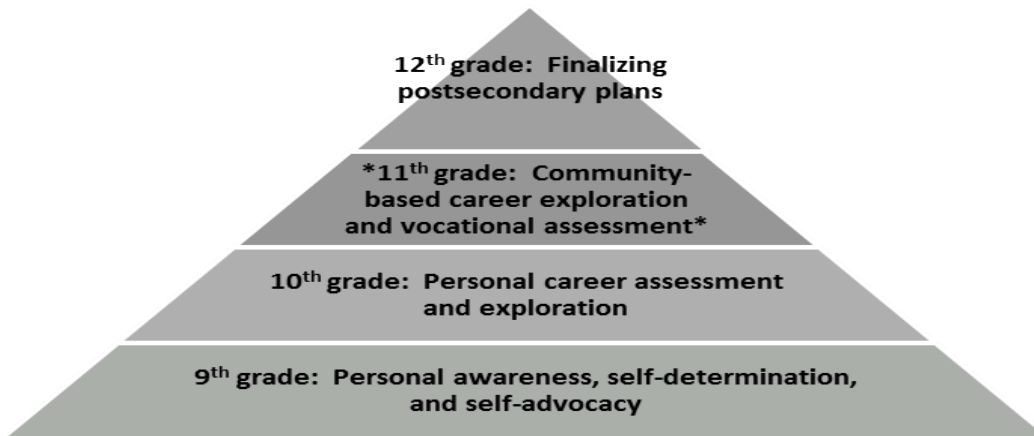
(goal setting and decision making), and self-advocacy (speaking up for yourself).

- 10th grade—**Career Exploration**
 - Career Exploration built upon personal awareness by introducing students to careers through assessment of and research into different types of careers. Students began to define their educational and career goals for life after high school.
- 11th grade—**Integrated Career Skills**
 - Integrated Career Skills bridged the classroom learning of employment skills to observing a variety of employment environments. Students completed independent workplace modules and participate in the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) project to narrow their educational and career goals.
- 12th grade—**Senior Seminar**
 - Senior Seminar was the culmination of three years of work to finalize and pursue their postsecondary plans for further education, employment, and independent living (Mattis, Taymans, & Anderson, 2010).

From 2007-2011, students enrolled into the C.I.T.Y. program, a partnership between the Kingsbury Center and The George Washington (GWU) Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) that provided career exploration opportunities for students with LD and funded by the HSC Foundation. In the past, portions of the junior class participated in two or three components of the C.I.T.Y.

program, such as job site visits, job shadowing, and paid internships on the GWU campus.

Figure 1. Kingsbury Center Transition Curriculum



*C.I.T.Y. was incorporated into the KTP in the 11th grade year (Mattis et al., 2010, p. 9).

The population consisted of former students with LD who had participated in the Kingsbury Center's high school transition program. A census was initially conducted due to the small group being studied. A group of 56 young adults was invited to participate in the study. Three cohorts of young adults from the graduating classes of 2009, 2010, and 2011 were formed to assess each class individually and as a group to determine trends of the population at specific intervals. In the pilot year, class of 2009, there were eight students who volunteered in the C.I.T.Y. program. There were approximately 10 students in that class who did not participate in the C.I.T.Y. program but participated in certain transition classes in the KTP. Juniors in the 2010 and 2011 KTP classes were required to participate in the C.I.T.Y. program. Demographic data of age, ethnicity, and gender were collected in the survey.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up study with former students who have participated in a transition program at the Kingsbury Center in Washington, DC. The school serves students with LD with many students having such additional disabilities as ADHD, speech language, and emotional and behavioral disabilities. In special education, transition programs have been developed to provide services to students seeking a seamless transition from high school to the postsecondary environment. The IDEA 2004 defines transition services as:

A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- (a) Is designed to be a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- (b) Is based on the individual needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests;
- (c) Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

[34 CFR 300.43 (a)] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

In IDEA 2004, Indicator 14 stipulates that schools are required to follow-up with students one year after exit from high school to determine their postsecondary outcomes.

Indicator 14—Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Research Questions

Therefore, this study was designed to follow-up with students with LD who had participated in a transition program at a private secondary high school in the District of Columbia. The three main questions that the researcher seeks to answer:

- 1) What are the post-school outcomes in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living of young adults who participated in the transition program at a private secondary school for students with LD within three to five years after leaving high school?
- 2) How satisfied are young adults with their quality of life in the postsecondary environment in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living within three to five years after leaving high school?
- 3) What aspects of the private secondary school's transition program translated into postsecondary outcomes as perceived by students?

These research questions were based upon a literature review of follow-along and follow-up transition studies evaluating outcomes of students with LD.

Statement of Significance

Follow-along and follow-up studies are designed to evaluate outcomes of youth with disabilities upon exiting from high school or college. There is an indication of improvement in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living for young

adults with LD (see Chapter 2). An area of concern in follow-up studies is the focus only on enrollment and basic information about employment (e.g., length of employment, wages) instead of degree completion or competitive employment. Most follow-up studies are conducted within a year upon graduating from high school and data are not continuously updated with each consecutive year to determine long-term education and employment outcomes. School systems often do not have the necessary personnel and funds to continuously follow-along students throughout their college years or training experience into competitive employment.

The field has yet to determine what is considered to be a “successful” outcome for young adults upon exiting high school (Levine & Nourse, 1998). For example, in the area of employment, is there a difference on what “success” means in earned income after high school vs. earned income after college? If a student chose to obtain employment as opposed to further education, is the post high school earned income considered “successful”? What if a student had an IEP goal of obtaining postsecondary education but decided to get a job instead. Is that student still considered to have had a “successful” outcome? How much of postsecondary outcome needs to relate back to the IEP (if at all), and how much of it relates to what students and families see as “successful” outcomes? A place to start answering these questions might in examining conceptual framework in transition (see Conceptual Framework in Chapter 1 & 2).

This study was designed to collect post-school outcomes on recent Kingsbury Center alumni as well as to provide a foundation for continuously collecting data. The data for this study were collected on three cohorts. Each cohort represented three to five years post high school. The potential significance of this study leads to the following

three main findings on young adults with LD on their postsecondary outcomes, quality of life, and perception of their transition from the KTP program.

- Young adults with LD are/are not enrolled in postsecondary education, obtaining and sustaining employment, and living independently. Former students were questioned from three to five years following high school.
- Young adults with LD are/are not satisfied with their quality of life after graduating from high school. Young adults with LD will be asked if they are satisfied in their postsecondary setting (e.g., Are you satisfied at your postsecondary institution, or would you like to change to another program?).
- Young adults with LD and their perception of aspects of the KTP that translated into positive postsecondary outcomes. Young adults with LD and their perception of KTP that do not connect to their postsecondary outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The KTP was embedded in career exploration and community-based instruction rooted in developing career and work experiences for youth with disabilities. Career development and vocational development theories are the foundation for transition programming. According to Parsons, (1909) posthumously published three main considerations individuals should consider in choosing a vocation:

1. A clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes;
2. A knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work;

3. True reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts. (p. 5)

These three points became the foundation for vocational development theory.

Vocational development theory is grounded on individual interests and preferences and related career experiences that help formulate an individual's self-concept (Super, 1952). Vocational development theory evolved into career-development theory and embraced the idea that making decisions and choices about careers is an ongoing process occurring while individuals obtain career-related experiences that shape and define their self-concept (Super, 1952).

Career development theory is rooted in the work of Super (1990), known for forming a life-span, life-space approach to career development that is based upon 14 propositions. The 14 propositions are the foundation of career-development theory and they consist of the following statements.

1. People differ in their abilities and personalities, needs, values, interests, traits, and self-concepts.
2. People are qualified, by virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations.
3. Each occupation requires a characteristic pattern of abilities and personality traits, with tolerances wide enough to allow both some variety of occupations for each individual and some variety of individuals in each occupation.
4. Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and, hence, their self-concepts change with time and experience, although self-concepts, as products of social learning, are increasingly stable from late

- adolescence until late maturity, providing some continuity in choice and adjustment.
5. This process of change may be summed up in a series of life stages (a “maxicycle”) characterized as a sequence of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline, and these stages may in turn be subdivided into (a) the fantasy, tentative, and realistic phases of the exploratory phase and (b) the trial and stable phases of the establishment stage. A small (mini) cycle takes place in transitions from one stage to the next or each time an individual is destabilized by a reduction in force, changes in type of manpower needs, illness or injury, or other socioeconomic or personal events. Such unstable or multiple-trial careers involve new growth, reexploration, and reestablishment (recycling).
 6. The nature of the career pattern—that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs—is determined by the individual’s parental socioeconomic level, mental ability, education, skills, personality characteristics (needs, values, interests, and self-concepts), and career maturity and by the opportunities to which he or she is exposed.
 7. Success in coping with the demands of the environment and of the organism in that context at any given life-career stage depends on the readiness of the individual to cope with these demands (that is, on his or her career maturity).
Career maturity is a constellation of physical, psychological, and social characteristics; psychologically, it is both cognitive and affective. It includes the degree of success in coping with the demands of the earlier stages and substages of career development, and especially with the most recent.

8. Career maturity is a hypothetical construct. Its operational definition is perhaps as difficult to formulate as is that of intelligence, but its history is much briefer and its achievements even less definitive. Contrary to the impressions created by some writers, it does not increase monotonically, and it is not a unitary trait.
9. Development through the life stages can be guided, partly by facilitating the maturing of abilities and interests and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of self-concepts.
10. The process of career development is essentially that of developing and implementing occupational self-concepts. It is a synthesizing and comprising process in which the self-concept is a product of the interaction of inherited aptitudes, physical makeup, opportunity to observe and play various roles, and evaluations of the extent to which the results of role playing meet with the approval of superiors and fellows (interactive learning).
11. The process of synthesis of or compromise between individual and social factors, between self-concepts and reality, is one of the role playing and of learning from feedback, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in such real-life activities such as classes, clubs, part-time work, and entry jobs.
12. Work satisfactions and life satisfactions depend on the extent to which the individual finds adequate outlets for abilities, needs, values, interests, personality traits, and self-concepts. They depend on establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which one can play the kind of role that growth and exploratory experiences have led one to consider congenial and appropriate.

13. The degree of satisfaction people attain from work is proportional to the degree to which they have been able to implement self-concepts.

14. Work and occupation provide a focus for personality organization for most men and women, although for some persons this focus is peripheral, incidental, or even nonexistent. The other foci, such as leisure activities and homemaking, may be central. (Social traditions, such as sex-role stereotyping and modeling, racial and ethnic biases, and the opportunity structure, as well as individual differences, are important determinants of preferences for such roles as a worker, student, leisurite, homemaker, and citizen). (Super, 1990, p. 206-208)

Eli Ginzberg (1972), another career-development theorist, formed a theory of occupational choice based on three core principles:

1. Occupational choice is a process that remains open as long as one makes and expects to make decisions about his work and career;
2. While the successive decisions that a young person makes during the preparatory period will have a shaping influence on his later career, so will the continuing changes he undergoes in work and life;
3. People make decisions about jobs and careers with an aim of optimizing their satisfactions by finding the best possible fit between their priority needs and desires and the opportunities and constraints that they confront in the world of work (p. 172).

Ginzberg (1952), similar to Super, outlined three phases that individuals complete to reach their career destination: fantasy choices (ages 11 and under); tentative choices (ages 11 to 17); and realistic choices (age 17 to young adulthood). The fantasy phase is a

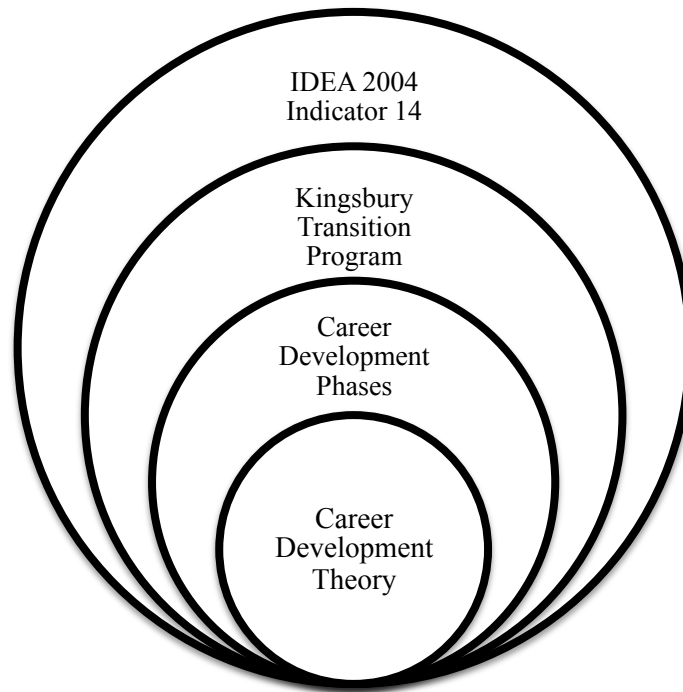
time of dreaming big dreams (Ginzberg, 1952). Youth can have different ideas, fantasies and dreams about their future life. The tentative phase is a time when youth investigates and identifies specific interests, capacities, and values that will enable the individual to be successful in the workplace (Ginzberg, 1952). At the end of the tentative phase, youth find themselves in the “transition phase” of looking towards such future goals as postsecondary education, training, and/or employment (Ginzberg, 1952, p. 493). The last phase, realistic, is a time of exploration, crystallization, and specification for youth to define their career goals based on the totality of their experiences (Ginzberg, 1952).

Career-development theory has contributed significantly to the foundation of transition programming. As noted earlier, IDEA 2004 legislation provides context to transition programming through Indicator 14 to ensure that schools follow up with students with disabilities one year following graduation. At the heart of Indicator 14 is the call for states to examine their transition programs through the postsecondary outcomes of their students. Transition programming focused on career development can assist states in preparing students to identify their career interests based on their individual skills, abilities, and preferences. Sitlington and colleagues provided a career-development model that included four phases of the career-development process and is grounded in assessment as the foundation for transition programming. The four career-development phases of transition programming included career awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation (Sitlington, Neubert, Begun, Lombard, & Leconte, 2007). The career-development phases was built on the work of Parsons (1909), Ginzberg (1952), and Super (1990).

- Career awareness, as defined by Sitlington and colleagues, is a time for youth with disabilities to “...discover the existence of work, jobs, various careers as well as college and other postsecondary education options, and participating in community and leisure activities” (p. 14).
- Career exploration is the second phase of career development that requires youth with disabilities to connect “...physically, emotionally, and behaviorally as much as possible with various aspects of work in different occupational or career areas” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 15).
- Career preparation is the time for youth with disabilities to begin “...acquiring career and vocationally related knowledge and skills” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 18).
- Career assimilation, is designed for youth with disabilities to “...blend into the workforce as a team player who self-initiate and who can move easily between positions or workplaces, both laterally and vertically” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 20).

The KTP was designed to assist youth with disabilities through each career development phase as outlined by Sitlington and colleagues. Youth with disabilities in the C.I.T.Y. program had opportunities to develop their self-concept through career-related experiences that could assist them in honing their postsecondary goals.

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework



In terms of follow-up studies, career-development theory allowed the researcher to approach post-school outcomes holistically in order to provide an accurate picture of where students are in education, employment, and independent living upon exiting from high school or college (see Figure 2). Most follow-up studies limit to one, a combination, or all three of these outcomes, such as only postsecondary education, employment, and/or independent living. This follow-up study sought to find out post-school outcomes in all three areas. The career-development theory provided an avenue in which young adults with LD could be viewed through a multi-dimensional lens that is based on their strengths, interests, and preferences.

Overview of the Methodology

This follow-up study consisted of collecting data through a telephone survey. As stated, Indicator 14 of IDEA 2004 requires school districts to conduct a follow-up study on young adults with disabilities within one year of the high school exit. This study used an existing survey instrument from the NPSO Center that has been vetted by U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). All students who participated in the KTP were asked to participate in the survey. A census was conducted due to the small population being studied in this study. A population of 56 young adults was invited to participate. The population of three cohorts of young adults from the graduating classes of 2009, 2010, and 2011 were used for this study. Demographic data of age, ethnicity, and gender were collected.

The research design of this follow-up study consisted of using an adapted protocol from two sources: (a) Post-School Outcome Data Collection Stage One and (2) Post-School Data Collection Stage Two. These protocols from the NPSO Center are used to understand each student's post-school outcomes in the areas of education, employment, and/or independent living (Alverson, Unruh, Rowe, & Kellems, 2011; Falls & Unruh, 2010). According to Kellems, at that time both protocols had not been tested for reliability or validity (personal communication, August 6, 2012). Three expert panels reviewed the survey to increase the content validity of the survey.

After the review, the researcher conducted a face validity test of the instrument through a pilot test on the revised instrument. The researcher updated the survey based on the feedback of the reviewers. Once the survey was finalized, the researcher began the process of inviting former students to participate in the study. Three rounds of contacting

participants by Kingsbury Center staff through mail, email, and social media were conducted to garner higher response rates. Respondents answered multiple choice and short-answer questions regarding their postsecondary outcomes related to employment, education, and independent living (see Appendix E). The data were collected and evaluated from each respective cohort to account for differences in experiences since high school graduation. Studies have provided clear evidence that the amount of time that students have been out of school has an effect on the outcome data (Newman, et al., 2011; Seo, Abbott, & Hawkins, 2008).

Limitations and Delimitations

Every study faces a set of limitations and delimitations as well as assumptions. There were a few limitations for this follow-up study. The first limitation was that the response rate threatened the internal validity of the study. Young adults agreed to participate in the study but never set up an appointment with the researcher to conduct a telephone interview. To address this limitation, the Kingsbury Center staff conducted three rounds of inviting participants to participate in the study through mail, email, and social media. The Kingsbury Center staff followed up with the non-respondents in the second and third rounds. The researcher kept detailed records on the response rate of all the respondents and non-respondents of those who never replied, declined, or withdrew their agreement to participate.

A second limitation to the study was that the survey protocol had not been tested for validity or reliability (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012). The follow-up survey used and adapted the questions from the NPSO protocols to align with the Indicator 14 requirements. There are specific questions about the school's transition

program that was added by the researcher. Participants were able to choose not to answer all of the questions, which could limit the representativeness of population of young adults with LD. Sensitive questions such as income and social habits may come across as too personal for participants to answer in a survey interview (Alreck & Settle, 2004). To address this concern, the researcher conducted three expert panel reviews and a pilot test of the instrument to address its validity and reliability. In addition, the researcher conducted a pilot test to strengthen the questions in the interview protocol in an effort to reduce bias. An assumption of the study was that all young adults with LD who were willing to participate would answer questions openly and honestly. A delimitation was the specific and small population that could limit the generalizability of the study. The population was kept to a specific subpopulation of former private school graduates with LD that featured a transition program.

Another limitation of this study was the lack of a comparison group of students without disabilities. Levine and Nourse (1998) emphasized in their review of the literature on follow-up studies that having a comparison group is important to determine growth between youth with disabilities and without disabilities since exiting from high school. The researchers cautioned in selecting any comparison group youth without disabilities to measure against youth with disabilities. Levine and Nourse (1998) suggested selecting a comparison group from similar school districts and graduation years. The researcher recognized this limitation of not having a comparison group of youth without disabilities in the study. By only following up with youth with LD, the researcher anticipated that their outcomes and results would better inform transition programs that focus on youth with LD.

Definition of Key Terms

Career awareness: The first phase of career development is a time in which youth with disabilities “...discover the existence of work, jobs, various careers as well as college and other postsecondary education options, and participating in community and leisure activities” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 14).

Career development: Career development is the “...total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic, and chance factors that combine to influence the nature and significance of work in the total lifespan of any given individual” (National Career Development Association Board of Directors, 2003, p. 2).

Career exploration: The second phase of career development in which youth with disabilities begin “...interacting physically, emotionally, and behaviorally as much as possible with various aspects of work in different occupational or career areas” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 15).

Career preparation: The third phase of career development in which youth with disabilities begin “...acquiring career and vocationally related knowledge and skills” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 18).

Career assimilation: The fourth phase of career development in which youth with disabilities “...blend into the workforce as a team player who self-initiate and who can

move easily between positions or workplaces, both laterally and vertically” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 20).

Follow-along studies: Studies that are “longitudinal, collecting outcome information at multiple points in time” (Halpern, 1990, p.14-16). These studies are designed to be “prospective, collecting predictor information at one point in time and outcome information at subsequent points in time” (Halpern, 1990, p. 14-16).

Follow-up studies: Follow-up studies are designed to be “cross-sectional, collecting information on outcomes at only a single point in time” (Halpern, 1990, p.14-16). These studies are “retrospective, collecting predictor information at the same time that outcome information is collected” (Halpern, 1990, p.14-16).

Indicators: The OSEP issued 20 monitoring indicators to guide and assist states in implementing and reporting progress to OSEP on IDEA 2004 (United States Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs, 2010). There are four indicators that relate to transition of youth with disabilities: Indicator 1, Indicator 2, Indicator 13, and Indicator 14.

Indicator 1: Percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Indicator 2: Percent of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Indicator 13: Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment; transition services, including courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals; and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP Team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP Team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or the student who has reached the age of majority (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Indicator 14: The percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- A. Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school;
- B. Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school; and
- C. Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (IDEA, 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Learning disability:

Conceptual definition: A learning disability is defined as having a neurological disorder that impacts the brain’s ability to retrieve, process, store, and respond to information (NCLD, 2010).

Operational definition: IDEA defines a learning disability as a “...disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia” (IDEA, 2004, Section 300.8).

Longitudinal study: A longitudinal study seeks to provide a multi-faceted picture of an individual and/or group of individuals during a period of time that assesses the “...various factors, conditions, contexts, and events that may lead to specific outcomes” (Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, & Herman, 1999, p. 35).

Post-school outcomes study: A post-school outcome study is a federally required follow-up survey on students with disabilities who have exited within a year from high school. The survey is designed to define the “...percentage of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school” (IDEA 2004, 20 U.S.C 1416(a)(3)(B)).

Program evaluation: Program evaluation is the “...process of gathering and analyzing data to help make decisions; it encompasses a set of philosophies and techniques to determine if a program “works” (Miller & Corbey, 2010, p. 80).

Transition assessment: Transition assessment is the “...ongoing process of collecting information on the student’s strengths, needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of the current and future living, learning, and working environments” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 2).

Transition curriculum: Youth with disabilities should have access to the following general domains: “...self-determination, social skills, career development and employment, independent living/life skills, and preparation for postsecondary education” (Taymans, 2010, p. 51).

Transition plan: The IEP, beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team and updated annually thereafter, must include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and where appropriate, independent living skills; the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under state law, a statement that the child has been informed of the child’s rights under this title, if any, that will transfer to

the child on reaching the age of majority under 20 U.S.C. 1415 (m). [IDEA, 20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII); 20 U.S.C. 1415(m); 34 CFR § 300.320 (b) and (c)]

Transition programs: A transition program is defined as providing services to students that will enable them to reach their postsecondary goals as stated in their IEP. There are five essential components of a transition program: student development, family involvement, program structure, interagency collaboration, and student-focused planning (Kohler, 1996).

Transition services: A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

(a) Is designed to be a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(b) Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and

(c) Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

[34 CFR 300.43 (a)] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Post-School Outcomes for Students with Learning Disabilities:

An Examination of Follow-Up and Follow-Along Transition Studies

Purpose

The purpose of this literature review was to examine how researchers conduct post-school outcomes for students with LD to track specific outcomes such as postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. This research synthesis was directed by an earlier literature review developed by Levine and Nourse (1998) that focused on post-school outcomes such as postsecondary education and employment as well as explored findings and presented five methodological issues that threaten internal validity. Therefore, an examination of the current literature has been conducted to determine if the findings and the effectiveness of the Levine and Nourse methodological issues have been addressed by other researchers.

Background

Follow-along studies and follow-up studies on students with LD have been conducted within the last three decades. Follow-along studies seek to provide a multifaceted picture of the individual during a period of time that assesses the "...various factors, conditions, contexts, and events that may lead to specific outcomes" (Raskind, et al., 1999, p. 35). In special education research, this type of study provides useful information regarding post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities (e.g., postsecondary education, employment, and/or independent living). Follow-along studies lay the foundation in creating future research by providing a forum for researchers to ask questions, seek answers, and closely examine the methodological approaches (Levine &

Nourse, 1998). One of the benefits of follow-along studies is that they have “...functioned as prototypes for current follow-up efforts and as catalysts for database policy change” (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 213). Follow-up studies have been conducted in special education in the last 30 years. In 1990, Halpern conducted a methodological review of follow-up and follow-along studies tracking students with disabilities leaving high school to postsecondary life. There is a difference between follow-up and follow-along studies. Halpern (1990) defined follow-up studies as:

- Cross-sectional, collecting information on outcomes at only a single point in time; and
- Retrospective, collecting predictor information at the same time that outcome information is collected (p. 14-16).

Halpern (1990) defined follow-along studies as

- Longitudinal, collecting outcome information at multiple points in time;
- Prospective, collecting predictor information at one point in time and outcome information at subsequent points in time (p. 14-16).

The most frequently used design concerning post-school outcomes studies is the follow-up study (Halpern, 1990). In the age of accountability, follow-along and follow-up studies have focused on post-school outcomes of transitioning youth with disabilities to determine whether schools are meeting the legal requirements.

In December 2004, President Bush signed IDEA 2004. One of the requirements of IDEA 2004 was the enforcement of states to develop a six-year state performance plan around 20 indicators. Two of the indicators focused on transition and postsecondary

outcomes. Indicator 13 focused on measurable annual IEP goals and transition services in relating to students' postsecondary goals. States collected data on the major components within Indicator 13 on the IEP for measurable postsecondary goals and linked annual goals to postsecondary goals, transition services, coordination efforts to adult services, age appropriate transition assessments, and courses of study related to postsecondary goals. Indicator 14 required all states to conduct a one-year post-school report on youth exiting from high school. While accountability is required under the IDEA guidelines, the underlying question is do transition services and IEP goals directly impact postsecondary outcomes for students with LD.

A learning disability is defined as having a neurological disorder that impacts the brain's ability to retrieve, process, store, and respond to information (NCLD, 2010). Statistics indicate that a learning disability can significantly impact postsecondary outcomes, including postsecondary education and employment. Of all the children who are enrolled for special education services in the United States, 2.3 million are students with LD (NCES, 2014). In the public school system, 43% of students in special education are identified as having a LD (Data Accountability Center, 2010; NCLD, 2010). Nearly 50% of students with LD academically perform more than three grade levels behind their peers (45% reading, 44% math) (NCLD, 2010). When compared to the nondisabled population, about 61% of students with LD graduate with a regular diploma contrasted with 88% of students without disabilities (NCLD, 2010). In terms of exiting high school, 25% of students with LD exit by dropping out, compared to 9% of students without disabilities dropping out (NCLD, 2010). In exploring postsecondary opportunities, two-

thirds of graduates with LD were considered “not qualified” to enroll in a four-year college program, versus 37% of students without disabilities (NCLD, 2010).

Theoretical Consideration

The KTP was embedded in career exploration and community-based instruction rooted in developing career and work experiences for youth with disabilities. Career development and vocational development theories are the foundation for transition programming. In 1909, Frank Parsons posthumously published that there are three main considerations that individuals should consider in choosing a vocation:

1. A clear understanding of yourself, your aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and their causes;
2. A knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work; and
3. True reasoning on the relations of these two groups of facts (p.5).

These three points became the foundation for vocational-development theory.

Vocational-development theory was grounded on individual interests and preferences and related career experiences that help formulate an individual’s self-concept (Super, 1952).

Vocational-development theory (later called career-development theory) embraced the idea that making decisions and choices about careers is an ongoing process while individuals obtain more career-related experiences that shape and define their self-concept (Super, 1952).

Career development theory was rooted in the work of Donald Super (1990), who is known for forming a lifespan, life-space approach to career development that is based

upon 14 propositions. The 14 propositions are the foundation of career-development theory as follows:

1. People differ in their abilities and personalities, needs, values, interests, traits, and self-concepts.
2. People are qualified, by virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations.
3. Each occupation requires a characteristic pattern of abilities and personality traits, with tolerances wide enough to allow both some variety of occupations for each individual and some variety of individuals in each occupation.
4. Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and, hence, their self-concepts change with time and experience, although self-concepts, as products of social learning, are increasingly stable from late adolescence until late maturity, providing some continuity in choice and adjustment.
5. This process of change may be summed up in a series of life stages (a “maxicycle”) characterized as a sequence of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline, and these stages may in turn be subdivided into (a) the fantasy, tentative, and realistic phases of the exploratory phase and (b) the trial and stable phases of the establishment stage. A small (mini) cycle takes place in transitions from one stage to the next or each time an individual is destabilized by a reduction in force, changes in type of manpower needs, illness or injury, or other socioeconomic or personal events. Such unstable or multiple-trial careers involve new growth, re-exploration, and reestablishment (recycling).

6. The nature of the career pattern—that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs—is determined by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, mental ability, education, skills, personality characteristics (needs, values, interests, and self-concepts), and career maturity and by the opportunities to which he or she is exposed.
7. Success in coping with the demands of the environment and of the organism in that context at any given life-career stage depends on the readiness of the individual to cope with these demands (that is, on his or her career maturity).
Career maturity is a constellation of physical, psychological, and social characteristics; psychologically, it is both cognitive and affective. It includes the degree of success in coping with the demands of the earlier stages and substages of career development, and especially with the most recent.
8. Career maturity is a hypothetical construct. Its operational definition is perhaps as difficult to formulate as is that of intelligence, but its history is much briefer and its achievements even less definitive. Contrary to the impressions created by some writers, it does not increase monotonically, and it is not a unitary trait.
9. Development through the life stages can be guided, partly by facilitating the maturing of abilities and interests and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of self-concepts.
10. The process of career development is essentially that of developing and implementing occupational self-concepts. It is a synthesizing and comprising process in which the self-concept is a product of the interaction of inherited aptitudes, physical makeup, opportunity to observe and play various roles, and

evaluations of the extent to which the results of role playing meet with the approval of superiors and fellows (interactive learning).

11. The process of synthesis of or compromise between individual and social factors, between self-concepts and reality, is one of the role playing and of learning from feedback, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in such real-life activities such as classes, clubs, part-time work, and entry jobs.
12. Work satisfactions and life satisfactions depend on the extent to which the individual finds adequate outlets for abilities, needs, values, interests, personality traits, and self-concepts. They depend on establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which one can play the kind of role that growth and exploratory experiences have led one to consider congenial and appropriate.
13. The degree of satisfaction people attain from work is proportional to the degree to which they have been able to implement self-concepts.
14. Work and occupation provide a focus for personality organization for most men and women, although for some persons this focus is peripheral, incidental, or even nonexistent. The other foci, such as leisure activities and homemaking, may be central. (Social traditions, such as sex-role stereotyping and modeling, racial and ethnic biases, and the opportunity structure, as well as individual differences, are important determinants of preferences for such roles as a worker, student, leisurite, homemaker, and citizen.). (1990, pp. 206-208)

Eli Ginzberg, another career development theorist, formed a theory of occupational choice that was based up on three core principles:

1. Occupational choice is a process that remains open as long as one makes and

expects to make decisions about his work and career;

2. While the successive decisions that a young person makes during the preparatory period will have a shaping influence on his later career, so will the continuing changes he undergoes in work and life;
3. People make decisions about jobs and careers with an aim of optimizing their satisfactions by finding the best possible fit between their priority needs and desires and the opportunities and constraints that they confront in the world of work (Ginzberg, 1972, p. 172).

Ginzberg (1952), similar to Super, outlined three phases that individuals complete to reach their career destination: fantasy choices (11 and under); tentative choices (11 to 17); and realistic choices (17 to young adulthood). The fantasy phase was a time of dreaming big dreams (Ginzberg, 1952). Youth can have different ideas, fantasies and dreams about their future life. The tentative phase was a time when youth investigates and identifies specific interests, capacities, and values that will enable the individual to be successful in the workplace (Ginzberg, 1952). At the end of the tentative phase, youth find themselves in the “transition phase” of looking towards such future goals as postsecondary education, training, and/or employment (p. 493). The last phase, realistic, was a time of exploration, crystallization, and specification for youth to define their career goals based upon the totality of their experiences (Ginzberg, 1952).

Career-development theory has contributed significantly to the foundation of transition programming. As noted earlier, IDEA 2004 legislation provides context to transition programming through Indicator 14 to ensure that schools follow up with students with disabilities one year following graduation. At the heart of Indicator 14 was

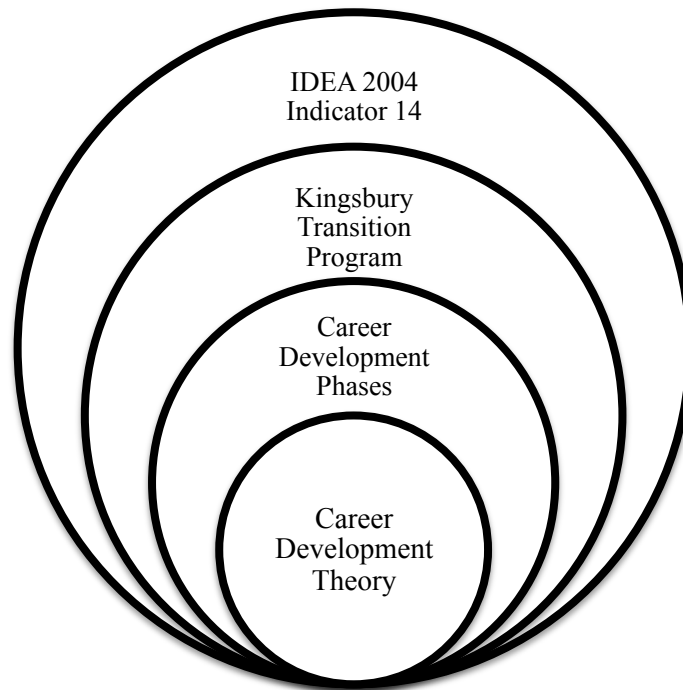
the call for states to examine their transition programs through the postsecondary outcomes of their students. Transition programming focused on career development can assist states in preparing students to identify their career interests based on their individual skills, abilities, and preferences. Sitlington and colleagues provided a career-development model that includes four phases of the career-development process and is grounded in transition assessment as the foundation for transition programming. The four career-development phases of transition programming includes career awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation (Sitlington et al., 2007). The career-development phases was built on the work of Parsons (1909), Ginzberg (1952), and Super (1990).

- Career awareness, as defined by Sitlington and colleagues, is a time for youth with disabilities to “...discover the existence of work, jobs, various careers as well as college and other postsecondary education options, and participating in community and leisure activities” (p. 14).
- Career exploration is the second phase of career development that requires youth with disabilities to engage “...physically, emotionally, and behaviorally as much as possible with various aspects of work in different occupational or career areas” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 15).
- Career preparation is the time for youth with disabilities to begin “...acquiring career and vocationally related knowledge and skills” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 18).
- Career assimilation is designed for youth with disabilities to have the opportunity to “...blend into the workforce as a team player who self-

initiate and who can move easily between positions or workplaces, both laterally and vertically” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 20).

The KTP was designed to assist youth with disabilities through each career-development phase as outlined by Sitlington and colleagues.

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework



In terms of follow-up studies, career-development theory allowed the researcher to approach post-school outcomes holistically in order to provide an accurate picture of where students are in education, employment, and independent living upon exiting from high school or college. Most follow-up studies limit to one, a combination, or all three of these outcomes such as only postsecondary education, employment, and/or independent living. This follow-up study sought to find out post-school outcomes in all three areas. The career-development theory provided a lens through which young adults with LD can

be viewed through a multi-dimensional lens that is based on their strengths, interests, and preferences.

Transition Programming Models

The KTP utilized an ongoing transition assessment to drive the career exploration and community-based instruction for youth with LD to create individualized career and work experiences based upon their interests, skills, and preferences. In the course of the literature review, two transition-program models provided a foundation in developing a strong transition program (Curtis, Rabren, & Reilly, 2009; Steele, Konrad, & Test, 2005). The two transition program models were Andrew Halpern's Quality of Life domains and Paula Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming, both based on theory. Halpern's quality of life framework focused on personal satisfaction and such outcomes as physical and material well-being, adult role performance, and sense of fulfillment (see Figure 4) (Halpern, 1993). Kohler's taxonomy on transition evaluated transition programming and services such as student-focused planning and development, interagency collaboration, program structure, and family involvement (see Figure 5) (Kohler, 1996). Halpern's quality of life domains are examined through multiple dimensions outside the school environment; Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition programming was designed to provide a set of guidelines within the school environment that will lead to successful postsecondary outcomes in multiple dimensions. Kohler's transition taxonomy builds upon previous work started by Halpern in his development of the quality of life framework. These transition program models provide an avenue in which individuals with LD can be viewed through a multi-dimensional lens.

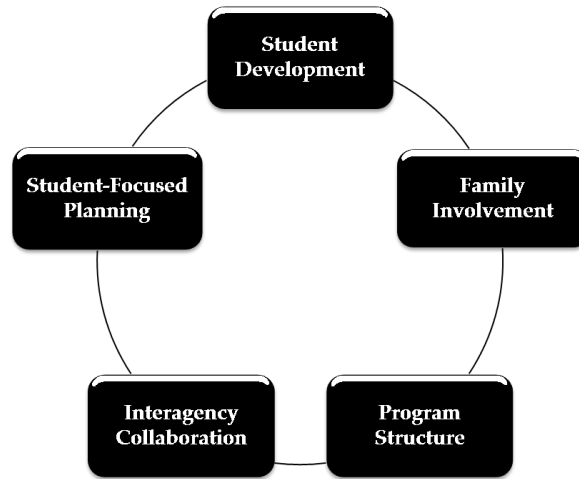
In 1993, Andrew Halpern presented a Quality of Life framework of transition outcomes. Halpern’s theory incorporates three Quality of Life domains that focus on these specific outcomes (a) physical and material well-being, (b) performance of a variety of adult roles, and (c) a sense of personal fulfillment (p. 490). In Figure 4, each of these domains is further broken down into smaller outcomes identified by Halpern. Halpern’s Quality of Life outcomes strived to go beyond education and employment to examine all aspects of the human condition.

Figure 4. Andrew Halpern’s Quality of Life Domains

Physical and Material Well-Being	Performance of Adult Roles	Personal Fulfillment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical and mental health •Food, clothing, and lodging •Financial security •Safety from harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mobility and community access •Vocation, career, employment •Leisure and recreation •Personal relationships and social networks •Educational attainment •Spiritual fulfillment •Citizenship •Social responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Happiness •Satisfaction •Sense of general well-being

In 1996, a transition model called Taxonomy for Transition was developed by Paula Kohler that provided a set of guidelines for effective transition programs in secondary schools. The overview of each of the five components of the Taxonomy of Transition Planning is highlighted in Figure 5. Student development, family involvement, program structure, interagency collaboration, and student-focused planning are all components of what makes a successful transition program in secondary schools.

Figure 5. The Taxonomy for Transition Programming

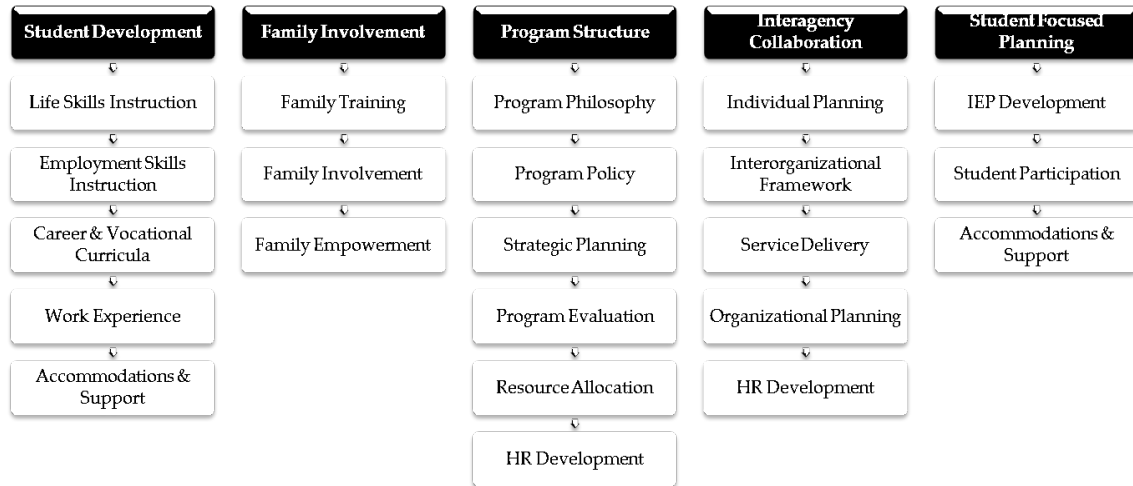


Adapted from Kohler, P. (1996). *Western Michigan University*. Retrieved December 2010, from Taxonomy for Transition Programming: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kohlerp/pdf/Taxonomy.pdf>

Similar to Halpern's Quality of Life Domains, each of Kohler's categories are broken into a specific criteria within each taxonomy (see Figure 6). For example, student-focused planning entailed IEP development, student participation, and accommodations and support (Kohler, 1996, p. 3). Student development focused on these areas:

- life skills instruction;
- career and vocational curricula;
- structured work experience;
- accommodations; and
- support (Kohler, 1996, p. 3).

Figure 6. The Taxonomy for Transition Programming



Adapted from Kohler, P. (1996). *Western Michigan University*. Retrieved December 2010, from Taxonomy for Transition Programming: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kohlerp/pdf/Taxonomy.pdf>

Self-determination was included within student development component by Steele, Konrad, and Test (2005) for the purposes of their study. Interagency collaboration involved designing a collaborative framework and service delivery within the community. Transition program structure consisted of:

- program philosophy and policy;
- program evaluation;
- strategic planning/quality improvement;
- resource allocation; and
- human resource development (Kohler, 1996, p. 3).

Family involvement components included family training, family involvement, and family empowerment (Kohler, 1996, p. 3). Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming provided a mechanism for families and school personnel to target specific components in a youth's transition program to translate to successful postsecondary outcomes.

These two transition-program models allowed the researcher to approach transition programming holistically to provide an accurate picture of how the KTP compares against known transition models. The models focused on youth with disabilities reaching their desired postsecondary outcomes. These transition models provided an avenue in which young adults with LD can be viewed through transition programming.

Search Strategy

Search terms. The investigation was conducted through the identification of these search terms: learning disability, transition, transition programs, longitudinal study, post-school outcomes, career development, follow-up study, follow-along study, and university/high school partnership.

Sources. Sources were found through a computer bibliographic search by using the search terms listed above in Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database, Dissertation and Theses Online, Academic Search Premier, and Career and Technical Education. An internet search was conducted using the Google Scholar search engine as well as utilizing the (cited by) feature to discover additional research articles by using these key terms: learning disability, transition, transition programs, longitudinal study, post-school outcomes, career development, follow-up study and university/high school partnership.

Selection criteria. For a study to be included in the literature review, it had to meet the following criteria: (a) connect postsecondary outcomes to a specific intervention, (b) include students with LD, and (c) use a longitudinal, follow-up or post-school outcome framework. After an initial search, a revision was made to the selection criteria, eliminating criteria (a). The researcher made the revision during the literature review because the majority of the studies did not link postsecondary outcomes directly to a specific transition program.

Extent and Nature of Literature

During the 1980s and 1990s, several follow-along and follow-up studies were conducted on post-school outcomes for young adults with LD. These studies led to the onset of post-school outcome studies required by IDEA 2004. In this research synthesis, 11 research studies focused on measuring post-school outcomes for students with disabilities after high school and two explored post-school outcomes after college. In terms of research design, the majority of studies were quantitative, incorporating a survey with the exception of two studies, one strictly qualitative and one a mixed-methods study. As far as the participants, six studies selected only students with LD and seven combined disability groups (e.g., learning disability, emotional behavioral disorder, and/or intellectual disability). None of the studies presented a theory base or conceptual framework for their study. In terms of findings, seven studies focused on examining three outcomes, including postsecondary education, employment, and independent living while seven studies focused only on one or two of these outcomes.

Table 2

High School Follow-Along and Follow-Up Studies

Study	Disability	Sample	Areas of Focus	Method	Results
Raskind et al., 1999	LD	n=41	Employment (E) Postsecondary Education (PSE)	Quantitative, Survey	E: 47% full, 41% not employed; PSE: 24% BA, 1 MA, 24% attend college
Murray et al., 2000	LD	n= 483 LD=168 Students without Disabilities (SWOD)= 315	E, PSE	Quantitative, Interview	E: Long-term benefit employment data inconclusive PSE: Youth with LD less likely to attend PSE schools than youth without disabilities. Youth with LD more likely to attend training programs and community colleges while youth without disabilities more likely attend four-year colleges. Youth with LD less likely to graduate when compared to their peers without disabilities at four-year institutions.
Baer et al., 2003	LD/ID/ Other	n=140 LD=85; ID=30 Other: 25	E, PSE	Quantitative Survey	E: 49% full-time PSE: 38% enrolled
Goldberg et al., 2003	LD	n=41	E, PSE & Success Attributes	Qualitative, ethnographic interview	Qualities: self-awareness, proactivity, etc.
Steele et al., 2005	LD/EBD/ ID	n=28	IEP goals vs. real outcomes; IEP goals relating to E, PSE, Independent Living (IL)	Quantitative Survey	Projected matches: E, IL, PSE; No: Leisure, IEP: IL & E goals most often
Seo et al., 2008	LD	n=571; LD=60; SWOD =511	E, PSE, IL	Quantitative Survey	Control for demographic variables: No difference with LD and without for E, school attendance. Exception: Parenting and Public assistance

Study	Disability	Sample	Areas of Focus	Method	Results
Chambers et al., 2008	LD/ID/Other	n=394 SWD=192 SWOD=202	E, PSE & training, IL, barriers, perceptions of high school preparation, interests & activities	Quantitative Survey (in-school and post-school instruments)	PSE & training: SWD: 9.4% Without D: 35%; IL: Both groups more likely to live in dependent settings; Interest & activities: 3 or 4 activities identified by those with D and 1 activity by those without D
Curtis et al., 2009	LD/EBD/ID	n= 1,888	E, PSE, IL	Mixed Methods, Survey & Focus Group	PSE: 27% E: 67%, 34% Not employed IL: 96% happy
NLTS-2, 2009	All categories & used LD specific data	n= 2,600	E, PSE, IL, productive engagement, social & community involvement	Quantitative Survey (telephone or mail)	PSE: 48% enroll, E: 64%, IL: 29%
NLTS-2 2010	All categories & used LD specific data	n=2,600	E, PSE, IL productive engagement, social & community involvement	Quantitative (telephone or mail)	PSE: 48% enroll, E: 64%, IL: 29%
NLTS-2 2011	All categories & used LD specific data	n=4,810	E, PSE, IL productive engagement, social & community involvement	Quantitative (telephone or mail)	PSE: 41% graduated; E: 67% at time of interview; 95% since high school; IL: 65%

The high school follow-along and follow-up studies are presented in Table 2. The university follow-up studies are outlined in Table 3. Both tables identify how the studies categorize disability, samples, postsecondary-outcome focus, methodology, and results.

Table 3

University Follow-Up Studies

Study	Disability	Areas of Focus	Method	Results
Madaus et al., 2001	LD	E, PSE	Quantitative, Survey & University Records, n=89	E: 87% full, 8% not employed; PSE: 79% BA, 17% MA/MS, 2% JD
Madaus, 2006	LD	E, PSE	Quantitative, Survey, n=500	E: 75% full, 12% not, PSE: 71% BA, 23% MA, 2% JD, 1% Doctorate

Follow-Along and Follow-Up Studies

Transition follow-along studies are designed to observe and monitor participants repeatedly at certain times upon exiting high school and college to measure their outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Post-school follow-up studies are important in understanding the life of students after they have left the secondary educational environment. The main purpose of these studies is to inform educators, policy makers, and families of the long-term successes or failures of educational doctrines or policies and to rewrite failing policies in our school systems. This literature review provides the current outlook on postsecondary education, employment, and independent living for students with LD who exited high school between 1985 and 2009 or college between 1979 and 2003.

Postsecondary Education

Postsecondary education was defined as obtaining further education in a college or vocational setting. There are two types of studies: those that track postsecondary enrollment upon completing secondary school and those that study the result of postsecondary education enrollment and degree completion in higher education. In studies examining high school exit to postsecondary education, researchers have often observed enrollment and attendance patterns, degree completion or highest postsecondary level attained, and/or success indicators such as self-awareness, perseverance, and social support networks (Baer et al., 2003; Chambers, Rabren, & Dunn, 2009; Curtis et al., 2009; Murray, Goldstein, Nourse, & Edgar, 2000; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Raskind et al., 1999; Seo et al., 2008; Steele et al., 2005). Studies that scrutinize exit from postsecondary education surveyed initial diagnosis of LD, degree completion, and further education since graduation from college (Madaus, 2006; Madaus, Foley, Mcguire, & Ruban, 2001).

Exit from high school to postsecondary education. Follow-along and follow-up studies of exiting students from high school to postsecondary education commonly track current enrollment and educational attainment. Follow-along studies that have explored post-school outcomes have indicated that students with LD have increased their enrollment and attendance in postsecondary education programs (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). Enrollment and degree completion in postsecondary education is usually tracked by three types of schools: career/technical institutions and two- and four-year institutions. The following sections highlight findings from these studies.

Career/technical institutions. Career/technical institutions are designed to teach students skill sets in specific careers such as cosmetology, massage therapy, and medical assistant. Depending on the nature of a program, a student can graduate with a certificate, diploma, or degree. The National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (NLTS-2) released a report entitled *Comparisons Across Time of the Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities up to 4 Years After High School*. The report provided comparison data between 1990 (cohort 1) and 2005 (cohort 2) on postsecondary enrollment of youth with LD. According to the findings, the enrollment of youth with LD in vocational, business, or technical school between cohort 1 and cohort 2 increased 10% (Newman et al., 2010). Overall, enrollment was 80% higher in cohort 2 as compared to cohort 1, which led to an average growth of 5% per year in career/technical education. The study by Murray and his colleagues (2000) compared postsecondary school attendance and completion rates of two high school graduate cohorts (e.g., 1985 & 1990) with LD and without disabilities. Researchers uncovered that high school graduates with LD were more likely to attend training programs while students without LD attended four-year institutions. These findings demonstrate a possible increase in interests and preparation in the career/technical path by students with LD.

Two-year institutions. Two-year institutions are community colleges that confer certificates, diplomas, as well as associate's degrees. For students with LD, enrollment at two-year institutions tends to be higher than in career/vocational or four-year college institutions (Murray et. al, 2000; Newman et al, 2010; Newman et al., 2011). The NLTS-2 comparison study reported that more students with LD enrolled in two-year community colleges than in four-year colleges and vocational/technical schools based upon cohorts 1

and 2 (Newman et al., 2010, p. 24). When compared to career/technical and four-year institutions, community colleges have approximately a two-to-one advantage in student enrollment. This study indicates a trend in enrollment with community colleges between cohort 1 and cohort 2 over career/technical and four-year institutions.

Smaller follow-up and follow-along studies provide a more in-depth focus at postsecondary enrollment and attainment at two-year institutions. In addition to the NLTS-2, there was one follow-along study and three follow-up studies that examined postsecondary enrollment and degree completion and discovered that the majority of respondents enrolled in a two-year institution more than four-year or career/technical institutions. A follow-along study conducted by Seo and colleagues explored postsecondary enrollment and degree completion between participants with LD and without LD. The Seo and colleagues' (2008) study included a cohort of relatively low socioeconomic status (SES) individuals from the same neighborhood. The sample size included 571 students, including 60 students with LD (Seo et al., 2008). The students were selected from a previous longitudinal study connected with 18 elementary schools from a Seattle school district (Seo et al., 2008). This is a different from the NLTS-2 sample, which provided a broader national focus. A majority of the participants with LD and without LD were enrolled in some type of college over career/technical schools at age 21 (Seo et al., 2008). Degree completion was slightly higher at two-year institutions than at four-year and career/technical institutions at age 24 for participants with LD (Seo et al., 2008). Seo and colleagues (2008) initially discovered, after controlling for demographic variables, significant differences in postsecondary enrollment at age 21 but not at age 24. Participants without LD had greater enrollment in postsecondary settings at

age 21 than at 24. To further explore this result, researchers ran multinomial regression analyses and discovered that there was a significant difference between those students who attended school full-time and those who did not attend at all. The researchers did find that there was no significant difference between students with LD and without LD in postsecondary enrollment at age 21 for those attending half-time, less than half-time, or not attending school. Seo and colleagues (2008) using multinomial logistic equation ultimately found no significant difference in ages 21 and 24 "...in postsecondary school attainment between students with LD and their peers without" (2008, p. 312).

The Steele and colleagues' (2005) study examined post-secondary outcomes within one year after graduation. The researchers evaluated IEP transition goals and post-secondary outcomes in two high schools from two different states and found that 28% of youth with disabilities were registered at two-year institutions (Steele et al., 2005). The follow-up study was conducted within a year after graduation from high school, which was different from the Seo study. The youth with disabilities in this particular study included students with LD and behavioral/emotional disabilities. The study employed a qualitative and quantitative analysis in examining postsecondary education outcomes for youth with high incidence disabilities by incorporating a survey and focus group. The survey sample had 1,879 students, and there was a 53% response rate. The sample came from a southeastern state during the exit years of 2003-2006. Based upon the respondent feedback, it was determined that a majority enrolled in two-year institutions over four-year and career/technical institutions.

Murray and his colleagues' (2000) study followed up with high school graduates from two classes from 1990 (5 year follow-up) and 1985 (10 year follow-up). At the five-

year follow-up, students without disabilities had a higher graduation rate from community college than students with LD. At the 10-year follow-up, students with LD and without disabilities had similar outcomes in graduating from community college. In all of these studies, there is clear evidence that students with LD are enrolling at two-year institutions. In contrast, the Chambers and colleagues (2009) study compared students with and without disabilities and discovered students without disabilities seemed to have a higher incidence of participation in two- and four-year institutions of higher learning.

Four-year institutions. Four-year institutions offer bachelor degrees with some offering graduate degrees to students. Four-year colleges vary in population size, domain settings (public or private), and range of degree programs. While students with LD are more likely to enroll in two-year institutions, their enrollment within four-year institutions is increasing (Newman et. al., 2010). Over a 15-year interval, between cohort 1 and cohort 2 of the NTLIS-2 study, the enrollment of students with LD at four-year institutions increased 15% per year (Newman et al., 2010, p. 24). Although this is a promising trend, when compared to the general population, about 10% of students with LD enrolled versus 28% percent of the population without disabilities (Wagner, 2005). The follow-up studies revealed that students with LD were less likely to enroll in four-year institutions than two-year institutions and training programs (Curtis et al., 2009; Murray et al., 2000; Newman et al., 2011). Future studies need to be conducted to determine why students with LD are less likely to enroll in four-year institutions than students without LD.

Synthesis of exit from high school to postsecondary education. Youth with LD are taking advantage of higher education in ever increasing numbers. The studies suggest

that most youth with LD are enrolling at two-year institutions, followed by career/technical and then four-year institutions (Murray et. al, 2000; Newman et al., 2010). The four-year institutions have the largest growth rate but lag behind two-year institutions in enrollment of students with LD (Newman et al., 2010). The research did not provide reasons why more youth with LD are attending two-year institutions. Two-year institutions are often smaller, closer to home, more financially accessible, and have less rigorous admittance requirements. These might be some of the reasons why more youth with LD attend two-year institutions over the career/technical schools and four-year institutions.

Four-year institutions experienced the greatest enrollment growth of youth with LD. The research does not provide information with regards to the increase in enrollment as well as to the types of universities and geographical distances from the student's primary residence. Additional research at four-year institutions could provide a well-rounded picture into some of the reasons youth with LD select postsecondary institutions. Post-school outcomes studies that track enrollment in the short term may not provide an adequate picture of what students with LD do in the years that follow graduation. If students are successful, postsecondary education is an important pathway for youth with LD in achieving such future life goals as employment and independent living.

Exit from postsecondary education. Madaus and colleagues have studied individuals with LD in college and university programs and provided evidence that students with LD are increasingly exiting higher education with a variety of degrees (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). In 2001, Madaus and colleagues published a follow-up study of university graduates with LD at public university in the northeastern

United States. The sample was selected from a pool of 209 students who graduated from universities between 1987 and 1999 (Madaus et al., 2001). One-hundred-and thirty-two individuals responded to the researchers after two waves of follow-ups to non-respondents (Madaus et al., 2001), yielding a 67% response rate (Madaus et al., 2001). All respondents reported self-disclosing and enrolling in an academic support programs developed for students with LD. Most graduates reported that their initial LD diagnosis was in elementary school (53.9%), with fewer being identified post high school (23.6%), in high school (12.4%), and in middle school (9%).

The students had over 44 different majors with a majority graduating from the College of Arts and Sciences (55%); other schools included the School of Education (11%), School of Family Studies (10%), College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (9%), and School of Business Administration (9%). The mean grade point average (GPA) was 2.7 ; the GPAs ranged from 2.0 to 3.7 (Madaus et al., 2001). Since graduation from college (1985-1999), students reported furthering their education in the following programs: graduate program (36%) and specialized program (29%). The highest degrees reported were: BA/BS (79%), MA/MS (17%), Juris Doctorate (2%), Masters of Social Work (MSW) (1%), and no response (1%) (Madaus et al., 2001). The study reflects a positive trend based upon respondents to the survey that students with LD are graduating with a variety of degrees. It is important to acknowledge that there might be a possibility of bias due to this smaller sample size. The study only reflects the responses of those who participated in the study; it does not take into account all the students with LD that graduated from the university. A drawback to the study is the range of years that the follow-up study connected with participants that exited college from 1985-1999. It is

important to take into account the life experiences of a person who graduated in 1985 and in 1999. This time frame concern is addressed in the methodological portion of the literature review.

Madaus expanded on the previous study by targeting a larger number graduates with LD (1,438) from a group of three universities (2006, p. 20). The response rate was 35%, meaning that only 500 students responded to the survey. As far as educational experiences, students reported information regarding their LD diagnosis, continuing education, and highest level of education achieved. Similar to the previous study, students reported receiving their primary LD diagnosis in elementary school. The post high school group was the second-highest group reporting when they received their primary LD diagnosis, followed by the high school and middle school groups. Since graduation from college, 66% have enrolled in some type of graduate or specialized program while 8% sought another undergraduate program. The graduates reported their highest level of education achieved: associates degree (.6%), BA/BS (71%), Certificate (1%), Doctorate (1%), Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) (.4%), Juris Doctorate (2%), MA/MS (23%), MSW (0%), and no response (2%). Students reported their years of graduation between 1979 and 2003. The most frequent year of graduation reported was 1999.

Synthesis. In final analysis, both studies contributed to the literature by following up students with LD after graduation from college. There were similarities in both studies due to having the same participant requirements (i.e., graduation from college) and survey design (e.g., mailed surveys). The results were similar in the timing of LD diagnosis, continuing education since graduation, and highest level of degree achieved. In

both studies, the majority of initial LD diagnosis happened in elementary school, followed by the second highest occurring post high school. If a college graduate with LD pursued further education, most enrolled in a graduate or specialized program. As for the highest level of degree achieved, the majority of participants received bachelor degrees, the second highest master's degrees. However, there were differences in the results of both studies due to the number of universities that participated and the response rates. The Madaus et. al (2001) study investigated one university while Madaus (2006) invited three four-year universities to participate.

In the first study (2001), participants did not disclose the type of postsecondary institution. The number of participants and response rates varied from both studies due to the nature and scope of the sample design. The first study (2001) obtained a response rate of 67%, or 89 graduates with LD. The second study (2006) attained a response rate of 35%, or 500 graduates with LD. In terms of results, it is inconclusive to state that more students with LD are receiving undergraduate and graduate studies due to the design and scope of both studies. For example, population size of the institutions was not taken into account in either study. Although both studies required that youth with LD be registered as having a disability, the studies did not disclose the extent of support provided by the university's disability office. The level of support (e.g., accommodations and support services) that graduates with LD might have or have not received during their postsecondary career might have contributed to the success of the graduates achieving their undergraduate degree and continuing onto graduate studies. However, both research studies do indicate that students with LD are graduating four-year institutions and obtaining further education.

Employment

In evaluating employment outcomes, researchers queried on several aspects of the work environment within the area of employment. All of the studies requested information beyond employment status (e.g., full- or part-time employment), such as earned income as well as the impact of LD in the workplace (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). However, inconsistencies were found across studies in the types of employment information requested. Consistency across studies helps policy makers and families obtain a more accurate picture of the LD workforce. For example, there were only two research studies that explored types of benefits received in the workplace after graduation from high school (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010). In addition, some studies explored job satisfaction within the context of work experiences or work conditions (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001; Newman et al., 2010). On the whole, employment outcomes seemed to be encouraging for people with LD. The employment section is divided into two sections based on how the follow-up and follow-along studies are divided: high school exit to employment and university exit to employment.

High school exit to employment. This section explored employment of individuals with LD who graduated from high school. The studies are further divided into short- and long-term investigations in the area of employment. The short-term studies surveyed students with LD within one to six years following graduation from high school (Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009, Newman et al., 2010; Seo et al., 2008; Steele et al., 2005); the long-term studies analyzed findings from a 20-year follow-up study

upon exiting from high school (Goldberg, Higgins, Raskind, & Herman, 2003; Raskind et al., 1999).

Short-term studies. The short-term studies that focused on employment outcomes have all been performed within one to six years following high school graduation. Three studies carried out survey research within a year to 15 months of graduation (Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009; Steele, 2005). The NLTS-2 reported on outcomes within one to four years after graduation (Newman et al., 2010). Seo and colleagues directed their follow-up research on LD and non-learning disabled adults within four years and again at six years from high school graduation. Only three studies included participants with a different diagnosis other than LD (Chambers et. al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009; Steele et al., 2005). Both NLTS-2 studies provided LD-specific data in addition to including other disability categories. To integrate findings from the studies, the sections will highlight the specific employment features and findings of each study.

The NLTS-2 featured several different employment domains in examining high school students with LD one to four years after graduation. The samples for this study ranged from 2,130 to 2,620 youth with disabilities (Newman et al., 2010). The sample pool included LD plus seven other different types of disabilities. The researchers investigated employment status, number and duration of jobs, types of employment, hours worked per week, wages and benefits, job accommodations, and job satisfaction. To synthesize the findings from all the short-term studies, this section will use the categories from the NLTS-2 report.

Employment status. Employment status can provide a lens into the job market to determine how it is affecting youth with disabilities. Three studies reported on

employment status of youth with disabilities. Employment status is defined as observing current employment and status (full- or part-time) since leaving high school. The NLTS-2 participants with LD reported that they were either employed during the time of the interview or have been employed since high school (Newman et al., 2010). At the time of the interview, 63% of students with LD had attained a paid employment position (Newman et al., 2010). For a majority of students with LD, 77% had received some type of paid employment upon leaving high school (Newman et al., 2010).

A study with a small sample (N=28) from two different high schools in two different states asked students if they had a job upon graduation (Steele et al., 2005). This particular sample of students included students with LD as well as students with behavioral/emotional and intellectual disabilities. At graduation, 82% were employed in either full- or part-time positions (Steele et al., 2005). During the follow-up telephone interviews conducted within 12 to 15 months after graduation, 85% of the students were employed part-time (35.7%) or full-time (50%) (Steele et al., 2005).

Curtis and colleagues (2008) surveyed youth within a year of graduation to discover their current employment status. Out of the sample size of 1,888 young adults with disabilities, 67% were employed and 34% were unemployed (Curtis et al., 2008). The young adults with disabilities worked full-time (60%) and part-time (40%) positions. The sample pool was similar to the previous study; it included students with LD, emotional disturbances, and intellectual disabilities. Full-time employment was defined as 35 or more hours per week (Curtis et al., 2008). In this particular study, unemployment was addressed in the employment status section. Unemployment status was revealed in 34% of participants (Curtis et al., 2008).

The Chambers and colleagues' (2009) study revealed that there was no significant difference between students with disabilities (N=192) and without disabilities (N=202) in employment status at the time of high school graduation and at the one-year follow-up. The participants in the study came from 15 high schools in Alabama that participated in Alabama's Transition Initiative (Chambers et al., 2009). The researchers reached out to 1,528 students to participate in the interview that included 764 students with and 764 without disabilities. The response rate was 25% (N=192) from students with disabilities and 26% (N=202) from students without disabilities (Chambers et al., 2009). Similar to previous studies, the sample included different disability groups such as learning (48%), intellectual (43%), and other (7%) (Chambers et al., 2009). At the time that students left high school, students with disabilities (63%) and without disabilities (66%) were employed (Chambers et al., 2009). At the one year follow-up interview, employment increased in both the students with disabilities (73%) and those without disabilities (74%) (Chambers et al., 2009). These studies, based upon respondent participation, indicate that youth with LD are receiving paid employment and are in either full- or part-time positions upon graduating from high school.

Number and duration of jobs. The NLTS-2 was the only study in the short-term study category to examine the number and duration of jobs since high school graduation. Seo and colleagues (2008) requested information on the number of months that students worked 30 to 35 hours per week within the last year from youth with LD and without LD at ages 21 and 24. The number of months worked by males with LD at age 21 at 30 hours per week was 8.13 months (SD=4.39) (Seo et al., 2008). Males without LD at age 21 worked 7.92 months (SD=4.31) (Seo et al., 2008). At age 24, males with LD at 35 hours

per week worked 9.03 months (SD=3.98), and males without LD worked 8.58 months (SD=3.96) (Seo et al., 2008). At age 21, females with LD at 30 hours per week worked 6.17 months (SD=4.63) and females without LD worked 6.89 months (SD=4.43) (Seo et al., 2008). The females with LD at age 24 at 35 hours week worked 5.43 months (SD=4.84), and without LD worked 7.39 months (SD=4.76) (Seo et al., 2008). Students with LD on average have had three jobs since high school (Newman et al., 2010). The average time on the job for youth with LD was 10 months (Newman et al., 2010). At the eight-year mark, students with LD held an average of four jobs with an average duration of two years per job (Newman et al., 2011). At age 21, average length of time employed was approximately eight months for youth with LD and without LD (Seo et al., 2008). At age 24, youth with LD on average were employed five to 10 months (Seo et al., 2008). The average length of time of employment for youth without LD at age 24 was approximately nine months (Seo et al., 2008). The length of employment was connected to the hours per week for youth with LD and without LD (please see *hours per week* section).

Based upon initial evaluation, youth with LD and without LD at age 21 and 24 have about the same length of employment. Young adults with LD and without LD usually change employment positions frequently due to the nature of the labor market for youth. Youth with LD have been considered an at-risk population, and it is important to track possible trends in number and duration of job. It is essential that more studies compare youth with LD and without LD to determine if employment after high school is an area of concern that faces a particular population or if it is a concern for the whole youth population.

Types of employment. The types of employment measures the quality of employment opportunities available to youth with disabilities. NLTS-2 was the only study to inspect types of employment of youth with LD since exiting high school. Types of employment for youth with LD ranged from food service to skilled labor. The five most reported areas of employment were food service, other, skilled labor, cashier, and gardening/grounds (Newman et al., 2010). It is common to see young adults starting out in the labor force in these types of industries. In eight years following high school, the five reported areas of employment were sales, food service, construction, personal care, and transportation (Newman et al., 2011). As young adults gather new knowledge and skills, new opportunities to change jobs and/or careers may be presented. The NLTS-2 study reported that the differences in the types of jobs held by young adults with disabilities was not significantly impacted by the duration of time since leaving high school (Newman et al., 2011).

Hours per week. The number of hours per week can provide information regarding an individual's full- and part-time status. Four studies assessed hours per week for youth with LD (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Seo et al., 2008), and these studies indicate that the majority of youth with LD work above 30 hours per week and are similar to their peers without disabilities. The average number of hours young adults with LD worked per week was 34-38 (Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). In one study, full-time employment was considered to be 35 or more hours per week while part-time was fewer than 35 hours (Curtis et al., 2009). When the data was broken down based on specific hours per week one to four years after high school, participants with LD reported that 1% worked five or fewer hours per week, 12% worked

5.1-14.9 hours per week, 11% worked 15-20.9 hours per week, 15% worked 21-34.9 hours per week, and 61% worked 35 or more hours per week (Newman et al, 2010).

Seo and colleagues' (2008) study was the only one that compared youth with LD to peers without disabilities in researching hours per week. The researchers used the following classification: 30 or more hours per week at age 21, and 35 or more hours per week at age 24 (Seo et al., 2008). The hours were linked to the average number of months employed. When comparing youth with LD to peers without disabilities, the study indicated that when accounting for LD status, there was no significant difference in hours per week at age 21 or 24 (Seo et al., 2008). The study seemed to show that youth with LD are attaining similar hours per week as youth without LD at ages 21 and 24.

Wages and benefits. Wages and benefits provide the means for sustaining life, such as food, shelter, clothes, and healthcare. Four studies requested participants to disclose their hourly wages or earned income (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Seo et al., 2008). One study surveyed participants by asking if they were paid more or less than the minimum wage (Curtis et al., 2009). The average hourly wage for youth with LD was \$8.10 (Newman et al., 2010). At eight years following high school, young adults with LD were making an average of \$10.60 per hour (Newman et al., 2011). Seo and colleagues (2008) identified earned income as money from all legal sources before taxes within the last year. The researchers compared earned incomes of youth with and without LD at ages 21 and 24 using square root transformations and multiple regression analysis to take into account demographic variables (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status). They discovered that there was no significant difference in earned income for young adults with and without LD.

Benefits in the workplace were examined in three studies (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011), which indicated that some youth with LD received some type of employment benefit although the majority of youth with LD did not receive any employment benefit. The majority of young adults with LD reported receiving some type benefit: paid vacation or sick leave, health insurance, and/or retirement benefits (Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). A study explored employment work benefits by health insurance, sick days, and other benefits (Curtis et al., 2009). The total sample that reported on work benefits was 1,370 youth with disabilities (Curtis et al., 2009). What is unique about this study is that researchers requested that the participants report yes or no as to whether they received benefits. Youth with disabilities disclosed that 47% received health insurance, but 53% did not have health insurance. As for sick days, 45% stated that they collected sick leave, but 55% did not receive sick leave. Other benefits were not defined in this study, although 32% reported receiving other types of benefits besides health and sick leave while 68% did not have other benefits.

Job accommodations. Individuals with LD may disclose their disability in the workplace as a means of receiving appropriate supports. The NLTS-2 was the only study that explored accommodations in the workplace. Only 19% of the NLTS-2 respondents with LD reported informing their employers of their LD, with 5% reporting receiving accommodations (Newman et al., 2011). Unfortunately, no additional information is available that would provide an explanation for the low rate of self-disclosure in the workplace. It is also not possible to know if those who did self-disclose requested an accommodations and were denied.

Job satisfaction. An important aspect of employment is job satisfaction, which was examined by two studies (Newman et al., 2011; Steele et al., 2005). These studies reported some positive findings. Across these two studies, at least 40-50% of youth with LD were highly satisfied in their employment positions. The Newman and colleagues (2011) study went beyond the Steele and colleagues study by examining job satisfaction and perceptions of youth with LD in the workplace. They found that over 90% of the young adults with LD reported being treated well by co-workers and receiving a promotion or taking on additional work responsibilities.

Synthesis on short-term studies. For most youth, exiting high school is an exciting and challenging time. In terms of employment, youth with LD are obtaining positive levels of employment and job satisfaction. Youth with LD are attaining full- and part-time employment alongside their peers without disabilities. As youth move into the job market, they are still learning about who they are and what they want out of life. The data reflect that youth with LD change jobs frequently and stay on the job for an average of 10 months (Newman et al., 2010). Although the NLTS-2 highlighted at the eight year follow-up, young adults with LD are averaging two years in their employment positions.

The NLTS-2 provided useful information regarding the types of employment and job accommodations for young adults with LD. According to Newman and colleagues (2010), youth with LD are significantly employed in the service-industry career cluster. Seo and colleagues (N=571) (2008) revealed that there was no significant difference in wages between LD and peers without disabilities at ages 21 and 24. It is interesting to note that wages were slightly higher for LD at 21 than at 24 years. There was only one study that gathered data regarding job accommodations (Newman et al., 2010). A small

fraction of youth with LD, (N=1,610) was found to be receiving accommodations on the job (Newman et al., 2010). Although a small fraction of youth with LD notified their employer of their disability (16%), only 1% of youth with LD received accommodations (Newman et al., 2010). Youth with LD have reported a positive level of satisfaction with employment (Newman et al., 2010). Colleague acceptance was found to be high in the workplace environment by young adults with LD (Newman et al., 2010).

Long-term studies. To be considered a long-term study, the length of the study had to be reported over a 10-20 year period. The long-term studies incorporated both high school to employment and college graduation to employment (Goldberg et al., 2003; Maduas, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001; Raskind, et al., 1999). This section of the paper is divided into two: high school to employment and university to employment.

High school to employment. Two studies examined the long-term adjustment of a group of individuals with LD after participation in the Frostig Center in California (Goldberg et al., 2003; Raskind et al., 1999). Adults with LD have increased in full-time employment and decreased in unemployment between the 10 (N=50) and 20 (N=41) year follow-up study (Raskind et al., 1999). It appears that as the adults with LD become more mature, the employment numbers become more stable. The sustainable, long-term employment in adults with LD could be related to having such qualities as self-awareness, proactivity, and perseverance. Both studies used the same sample of 41 adults with LD (Goldberg et al., 2003; Raskind et al., 1999). The 20-year sample (N=41) was pooled from the 10-year follow-up sample (N=50) on individuals with LD. The average age of individuals with LD in the 20-year follow-up was 32 years (Raskind et al., 1999). Raskind and colleagues (1999) wanted to ensure representativeness of the sample for

their study from the original pool of students selected to participate in the follow-up study. Chi-square testing disclosed that the sample was not significantly different from the original pool of students in the areas of ethnicity, gender, or SES (Raskind et al., 1999).

The quantitative and qualitative studies were developed to determine predictors of success for individuals with LD. Employment was one area that was examined in both of these studies. The goal of the study was not to directly seek employment outcomes but to seek patterns of change through the years as well success attributes. At the 20-year follow-up (N=41), researchers found that amongst adults with LD, 47% were employed full-time, 12% part-time or temporary, and 41% were unemployed (Raskind et al., 1999). The 20-year data in full-time employment and unemployment improved over the 10-year data. The 10-year data revealed that full-time employment was at 14%, part-time at 39%, and unemployment at 47% (Raskind et al., 1999). The researchers did not uncover why over 40% of the adults were unemployed in the 10-year and 20-year follow-up.

The Goldberg and colleagues (2003) qualitative study expanded the Raskind et al. study (1999) by examining behavior patterns between successful and unsuccessful adults with LD. At the 20-year mark, participants indicated that their LD impacted across the lifespan in a variety of contexts and patterns with a continued need for services (Goldberg et al., 2003). The participants reported qualities that enabled them to be successful in their life such as: (a) self-awareness, (b) proactivity, (c) perseverance, (d) emotional stability, (e) appropriate goal setting, and (f) use of social support (Goldberg et al., 2003, p. 224). The majority of unsuccessful adults with LD did not incorporate these traits into their daily life.

College/University to employment. Research on the relationship between higher education degree completion and employment suggests a correlation between receiving a degree and sustainable employment (Aud, KewalRamani, & Frohlich, 2011; Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010). Madaus and colleagues developed two studies that assessed employment outcomes of graduates with LD. The first study obtained employment outcomes from one university (N=89), and the second study examined employment outcomes from graduates from three universities (N=500) (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). The two categories developed for both studies are employment status and impact of LD on employment. This section is divided into both categories highlighting the variables within each category.

Employment status. The variables under employment status included employment as a student, current level of employment, and current annual salary (Madaus et al., 2001, p. 141). The second study expanded the employment status information collected to include the current levels of employment, why employed part-time, seeking employment if not employed, reason for not seeking employment, salary, ever laid off, reason for lay off, benefits, and type of current employment (Madaus, 2006, p. 24-25).

Employed college graduates with LD received employment opportunities within full benefits (Madaus, 2006). Young adults with LD received salaried positions that led to more stable employment patterns in the workplace. The current levels of employment in both studies broke the categories into full-time, part-time, and not employed (Madaus et al., 2001). In the single university study, the majority of LD graduates were employed full-time (87%), and unemployment was less than 10% (Madaus et al., 2001). It remains unknown as to why 10% of the participants were unemployed. In a sample population of three universities, the study showed that a majority received full-time employment (75%)

although unemployment was at 12%. For the 12% unemployed, they listed a variety of reasons for their unemployment status, such as caring for children and health issues. In both studies, the majority of LD participants fell into the annual salary range of \$20,000-\$60,000 (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). This study conducted a chi-square analysis and discovered a significant relationship between gender and level of salary (Madaus, 2006). In contrast to the previous study, this research inquired about employee benefits (Madaus, 2006). It was reported that a little over 75% of participants that worked full-time received full employee benefits (Madaus, 2006), although 24% received partial or no benefits for their part-time employment (Madaus, 2006). They found that most participants were in the career fields of business, education, healthcare, and technology (Madaus, 2006). Upon exiting from college, the average participant had had three jobs and an average length in their current position of 4 years (Madaus, 2006).

Impact of LD on employment. The Madaus and colleagues (2001) study explored the impact of LD on employment in such areas as how LD affects the work day and the reasons for disclosing or not disclosing one's LD. In the second study, Madaus (2006) examined the impact of LD on employment by incorporating the previous three variables from the first study as well as how LD impacts work, how frequently LD impacts work, self-disclosure to employer, to whom it is disclosed, negative effects of disclosure, request or denied for accommodations, reason for no disclosure, and strategies and accommodations used.

In evaluating the effect of LD on employment, participants confirmed what some of the earlier studies have recognized, that LD impacts employment and issues with disclosure. Consistently in both studies, young adults reported that their LD impacted: (a)

writing skills, (b) rate of processing information, and (c) reading comprehension (Madaus, 2006; & Madaus et al., 2001). A little over half of the participants disclosed their disability in the workplace although 46% never self-disclosed to an employer (Madaus, 2006). The reasons for disclosure included: (a) need for additional time, (b) use of technology, (c) the need for more detailed directions, and (d) increasing awareness of supervisor or co-workers (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). For those who chose not to disclose their disability, the majority cited no reason/no need and fear of negative impact from their supervisor and co-workers (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). Only 12% of college graduates with LD requested formal accommodations in the workplace, although the majority (88%) did not request accommodations (Madaus, 2006). Of those who requested an accommodation, nearly 30% of the requests were denied (Madaus, 2006). The five most requested accommodations were: (a) setting goals and priorities, (b) time management, (c) arrive at work early, (d) staying at work late, and (e) problem-solving and brainstorming (Madaus, 2006).

Long-term studies synthesis. Adults with LD who graduate from college appear to have improved employment opportunities, salaries, and benefits over youth with LD exiting high school. College graduates with LD are employed in career fields of business, education, healthcare, and technology. Youth with LD seem to be relegated to such service-industry careers as retail, food service, and unskilled labor. Adults with LD have been found to have salaried positions and youth with LD have waged positions. On average, recent college graduates with LD managed to stay in their positions longer than youth with LD upon exiting from high school. Recent college graduates with LD tend to receive such employment benefits as healthcare, retirement, and annual/sick leave as

opposed to youth exiting from high school with LD. College is an opportunity for young adults to become self-aware, proactive, and persevere through challenging educational curricula. These challenges can shape the qualities of young adults and lead them to successful employment opportunities that are not always available to youth with LD.

Independent Living

In evaluating independent living outcomes, each study had a specific criteria as to what constituted successful independent living outcomes for students with LD. The literature review that explored independent living outcomes were the high school follow-along and follow-up studies (Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et. al, 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Steele et. al, 2005). The longitudinal studies that followed up college graduates only focused on further education and employment outcomes. A range of categories were explored from health and family differences to living arrangements in these studies. Independent living outcomes include social and community involvement, as well as levels of satisfaction within the community.

High school exit to independent living. For youth with LD, independent living is an important area to consider as they transition from high school to postsecondary environment. The independent living goal is part of the transition IEP for youth with disabilities, in addition to education and employment goals. It is a common societal growing pain for many young adults transitioning from a parental/guardian home to a place of their own. The studies reviewed indicated that youth with LD are generally satisfied with their living arrangements upon exiting high school (Chambers et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009).

Youth with LD generally suffer the same struggles and hardships as youth without disabilities when starting a life as an independent adult. In high school, independent living skills and goals are considered to be part of the transition IEP for students in special education. Independent living goals were cited in the IEP 90% (N=28) of the time at one school that measured IEP independent living outcomes (Steele et al., 2005). As far as the projected IEP goals and actual post-school outcomes, over 30% of residential matches were found matching the IEP goals to the student outcomes (Steele et al., 2005). However, there were no leisure/recreation goals or matches between the IEP and actual independent living outcomes (Steele et al., 2005). Chambers and colleagues (2009) revealed that both groups (e.g., young adults with LD (N=192) and without disabilities (N=202) are likely to be living in dependent settings. Seo and colleagues (2008) explored parenting and public assistance while controlling for demographic variables. The prediction to have children or be on public assistance was due to other factors (e.g., female, race, SES) not on having a learning disability. Curtis and colleagues (2009) asked follow-up questions related to independence and community engagement in which participants shared their levels of satisfaction with their living arrangements, friends, family, and community life. Participants reported high levels of satisfaction in living arrangements, friendships, family relationships, community life, free-time, and decision-making (Curtis et al., 2009). In the focus group, the lowest level of satisfaction reported by participants and their families was transportation (Curtis et al., 2009). The NLTS-2 (N=360) explored household circumstances as well as social and community involvement in youth with disabilities. It reported that young adults with LD (74%) were highly satisfied with their living arrangements and social and community involvements. Young

adults who lived outside of their parents' home reported a higher levels of satisfaction (76%), as opposed to those who were living with their parents and preferred to be living somewhere else (45%) (Newman et al., 2009).

Methodological Concerns

In 1998, Levine and Nourse conducted a literature review on follow-along and follow-up studies about post-school life for youth with LD. They analyzed the 13 most-cited post-school studies from the 1980s and '90s. The purpose of follow-up studies is to help schools better prepare youth with disabilities for the world by examining the long-term outcomes of youth with disabilities (Levine & Nourse, 1998). The researchers noted

...contradictions in the findings...five methodological issues that seem to influence the conduct and interpretation of follow-up studies: aggregating data across disability categories; combining data on graduates who have been out of school for unequal periods of time; ignoring issues in missing data, participant attrition, and incomplete data sets; combining data from different informants; and using nonequivalent databases to make comparisons to a population with no disabilities. (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 212)

The purpose of this literature review, with 13 peer-reviewed research studies, was to determine if researchers continued to make these types of methodological errors. The following tables provide a closer examination of how the current studies measure against methodological criteria.

Table 4

High School Exit Methodological Assessment

Study	Group Disability Categories	Time Frame Age Range ***	Missing Data Response Rate	Informant Data	Compare to students without disabilities
Raskind et al., 1999	LD	28-35 yrs. old	82%	Consumer	No
Murray et al., 2000	LD	1985 and 1990**	No rr* reported	Consumer	No
Baer et al., 2003	LD/ID/Other	1997 or 2000	No rr* reported	Consumer	No
Goldberg et al., 2003	LD	28-35 yrs. old	82% rr	Consumer	No
Steele et al., 2005	LD/EBD/ID	2002	54% rr*	Consumer	No
Seo et al., 2008	LD	21 yrs. and 24 yrs.	94.7% rr @ 21 yrs. 93.7% rr @ 24 yrs.	Consumer	Yes
Chambers et al., 2009	LD/ID/Other	2000**	25% rr @ SWD 26% rr @ SWOD	Consumer & Parent	Yes
Curtis et al., 2009	LD/EBD/ID	2003-2006**	53% rr*	Consumer & Parent	No
NLTS-2, 2009	All categories & LD specific data	17-21 yrs. old	Youth Telephone interview: 92% rr* Youth Mail Survey: 65% rr* Parent Interview: no rr reported*	Consumer & Parent	Yes
NLTS-2, 2010	All categories & LD specific data	1990: 19-27 yrs. old 2005: 15-19 yrs. old	NLTS: Parent/Youth Telephone Wave 2 Interview and mail survey 77% rr NLTS-2: Wave 3 parent/youth interview and mail survey 67% rr	Consumer & Parent	No
NLTS-2, 2011	All categories & LD specific data	21-25 yrs. old	Parent/Youth Telephone Interview or mail questionnaire: 45% rr*	Consumer & Parent	No

*provided no explanation as to why all the participants did not respond to survey or did not provide response rate.

**Chambers, Curtis, & Murray studies did not provide age range. Curtis study simply provided the years they gathered each graduating classes data, which was 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

***Age range indicates a time in studies. Majority of studies collapsed ages together, with the exception of the studies that were conducted in waves, such as NLTS-2 and Seo and colleagues.

The high school follow-up and follow-along studies (see Table 4) are compared to a specific methodological criteria as outlined by Levine and Nourse (1998). The university follow-up studies (see Table 5) are compared to the same methodological criteria as outlined by Levine and Nourse (1998).

Table 5

University Exit Methodological Assessment

Study	Group Disability Categories	Time Frame	Missing Data	Informant Data	Compare students without disabilities
Madaus et al., 2001	LD	1985-1999	67% rr*	Consumer	No
Madaus, 2006	LD	1979-2003	35% rr	Consumer	No

*provided no explanation as to why all the participants did not respond to survey

Grouping Disability Categories

The danger in combining data from different disability groups is that the data may not be accurate for a particular disability group. The NTLs-2 (2009) research provides convincing evidence for this in the comparisons across disability groups, which indicate that youth with varying disabilities do have different postsecondary outcomes. Out of the 13 studies evaluated in this literature review, four grouped data across disability categories (Baer et al., 2003; Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009; Steele et al., 2005) and the NLTS-2 grouped across disability categories as well as provided LD-specific data (Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010, Newman et al., 2011). Two studies combined students with LD, emotional and behavioral disabilities, and intellectual disabilities as shown in Table 4. The NLTS-2 provided LD-specific data as well as 12 other disability categories. Due to the nature of and differences between disability groups,

it is only fair to provide an accurate picture of how each disability group succeeds or fails within that particular category. The majority of studies in this literature review group disability categories within the learning disability category.

Time Frame

Time frame is another area of methodological concern for data interpretation. It has been found that

...when we combine outcome data for participants who are different ages or have been out of school for different amounts of time, as well as for those who exit school at high or low periods of economic prosperity, in diverse geographic areas; and in varying forms, such as graduate, dropout, age-out (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 219) .

In a time of accountability and IDEA goals, this highlights how follow-along and follow-up studies conducted the first year after exiting high school can be a time of “...uncertainty and transition, and it too needs to be understood” (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 220). Therefore, a more accurate picture of post-school outcomes on students with LD should be conducted in intervals upon exiting from high school and/or college. If studies do not embrace this methodological concern, it can threaten the validity of the findings.

In terms of meeting this methodological criteria, the NLTS-2 and with/without LD studies synchronized time frames in following up with youth with LD (Newman et al., 2010; Seo et al., 2008). The researchers point out that one of the weaknesses in the area of transition follow-up studies is a lack of research examining five to 10 years beyond high school (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 220). In the case of this literature review, the

majority of studies combined ages and exit years to obtain outcome data in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living as shown in Tables 4 and 5 (Curtis, et al., 2009; Goldberg et al., 2003; Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001; & Raskind et al., 1999). Two studies combined a nine- to 10-year period in which participants exited from college that threatened the validity of both studies (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001). In analyzing data from a young adult with LD who graduated in 1999 to a young adult with LD who graduated in 2010, it would be an unfair comparison due to how much more time the first participant had to establish connections that led to employment with higher earnings, further education, and/or home ownership. It is important in longitudinal and follow-up research that researchers do not group students with LD from multiple graduation years (Levine & Nourse, 1998).

Missing Data

Follow-along and follow-up studies often do not report response rates or concern themselves with the issue of missing data on its participants. Often the ability for research studies to obtain generalizability declines significantly when studies do not report on their missing participant data and response rates (Levine & Nourse, 1998). In this literature review, 11 of the studies reported on the response rates of the participants, which is a strength for each study. Most of the studies reported a response rate of 50% or higher, such as the NLTS-2. In addition, two studies reported on reasons for attrition, such as declining to participate and repeatedly did not respond to written or telephone requests (Goldberg et al., 2003 & Raskind et al., 1999). However, half of the studies do not report reasons for attrition. In survey research, researchers rely on the participants that do respond and can only present data outcomes from those who have responded. To

make the majority of studies stronger in terms of missing data, studies need to have an explanation as to why participants did not participate in the study to provide an explanation on bias based on those who did respond to the survey requests (Levine & Nourse, 1998).

Informant Data

Differing participants (parents, guardians, relatives) representing people with disabilities might present a different picture on post-school outcomes than students with disabilities (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 221). A follow-up or follow-along study that "...mixes respondents might encounter problems with validity or reliability with regard to the instrument or techniques chosen" (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 221). Levine and Nourse (1998) are concerned with parents and guardians who answer the follow-up questions on behalf of the youth with disabilities. The majority of studies in this literature relied on data directly from the participants. However, five studies disclosed that they received informant data from the parents as well as youth with LD in reporting post-school outcomes (Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et. al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). The NLTS-2 conducted a separate parent interview in addition to the student interview. In some instances, parent and student interview data can be a strength in comparing and reporting the similarities and differences in the responses. In some cases, due to the nature of a child's disability, parents answered the survey or focus group questions in the cross disability studies (Chambers et al., 2009; Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). Young adults with LD should be able to respond to surveys. In a study that conducted a focus group, there were only four participants with disabilities and

the rest were parents (seven parents total) (Curtis et al., 2009). Curtis and colleagues (2009) reported that 16 individuals with disabilities were represented in the focus group session. The researchers point out that for follow-along studies it is more challenging to locate students and easier to contact parents for student data information (Levine & Nourse, 1998). The problem is that parents may participate in the study but not know all the information about their child, thus resulting in data inaccuracies (Levine & Nourse, 1998).

Comparisons to Students Without Disabilities

Often researchers neglect to compare data on students with LD to their peers without disabilities (Levine & Nourse, 1998, p. 220). Only two studies measured youth with LD to a control group that consisted of peers without LD (Chambers et al., 2009 & Seo et al., 2008). The Seo (2008) study provided proportionate data between individuals with learning disabilities (N=60) and nondisabled peers (N=511). By comparing students with LD to their nondisabled peers, the study found no significant differences, when controlled for demographic variables, in postsecondary education and employment between students with and without LD. The Chambers and colleagues' (2009) study revealed that young adults with LD share a common outcome with their peers without disabilities by continuing to live in a dependent setting (i.e., parents/guardians, relative). Young adults without disabilities are more likely to enroll in a two-year or four-year institution than young adults with LD (Chambers et al., 2009). The NLTS-2 did compare to general population data to the previous NLTS 1997, 2001 data collection, NLTS Add Health, and Wave 3 studies. However, NLTS-2 did not have its own control group to measure against the general population. In order provide an accurate data and assessment,

researchers need to compare youth with LD to youth without disabilities to determine what outcomes (i.e., employment and education) are or are not significant as done in the Seo study (Levine & Nourse, 1998).

Summary

Longitudinal and follow-up transition studies are designed to evaluate outcomes of youth after graduation from high school or college. The studies indicated that more students with LD are enrolling in higher education institutions, but the enduring question remains as to whether they are earning degrees that will enable them to find long-term employment. The good news is that there might be little to no differences between students with LD when compared to their peers without disabilities in postsecondary education (Seo et al., 2008). However, an area of concern in post-school studies is that the focus is often on enrollment instead of degree completion. Often studies do not include students who have dropped out of high school or college. To ensure that high school and postsecondary programs are fully informed about the effectiveness of their services, it is important to address the reasons for their withdrawal from school. IDEA 2004 requires school systems to follow up on youth with disabilities within a year of graduation. To truly understand the postsecondary trends of youth with disabilities, follow-along and follow-up studies are needed to determine if youth with LD are experiencing similar outcomes as students without LD.

Overall, the studies reviewed provide evidence that individuals with LD are finding full- and part-time employment upon exiting college or university. All of these studies vary in how they evaluate employment outcomes (e.g., earned income, employment status, benefits). Therefore, researchers have different ideas as to what

entails a “successful” employment outcome. Successful employment is more than employment demographics (e.g., income, hours worked, type of employment). An area of concern identified in three studies is the lack of disability disclosure by individuals with LD in the workplace (Madaus, 2006; Madaus et al., 2001; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011). Upon closer analysis, the lack of accommodations being granted in the workplace indicates a possible breakdown between employee and employer disclosure needs.

There is an indication that students with LD are satisfied with their independent living outcomes upon exiting from high school (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2011). However, it is hard to build consistency in results within the area of independent living when researchers have different ideas as to what it means to have a successful outcome. The lack of consistency in evaluating specific outcomes in independent living is an area for further research. An area of concern, displayed in a focus group study, is the lack of satisfaction youth with LD have with transportation for individuals with disabilities (Curtis et al., 2009). For many youth, transportation means access to postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. This lack of transportation can be a significant barrier in gaining the necessary life experiences to become a self-sufficient adult.

The results indicate improvement in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living, but there is a debate on what is considered a “successful” outcome upon exiting from high school and college that needs to be conducted in the field. For example, in employment, is there a difference on what “success” means in earned income after high school vs. earned income after college? All of the studies examined in this

paper did not include a conceptual framework. Career-development theory is used in this study to bridge the gap between theory and practice in transition programming. Halpern's Quality of Life (1993) as a transition model program might be able to build a consensus around exactly what it means to be a "successful" adult with a learning disability. Kohler's Taxonomy on Transition (1996) as a transition model program provides guidance to researchers on factors that can affect post-secondary outcomes.

In summary, there are two areas of concern: how to (a) measure success consistently and (b) address the gaps in the methodological approaches. There does not seem to be consensus among researchers on how to measure "success" within independent living and employment. Researchers vary in how they evaluate independent living based on levels of satisfaction (e.g., friendships and family) to crime and victimization. Whereas in employment and postsecondary education, there seems to be a consensus across studies, such as types of college, degrees earned, employment status, and earned income. Such methodological concerns in follow-up studies are the grouping of data across disability categories, time of exit (graduation), missing data, reporting from different participants (parents/guardians), and comparisons to people without disabilities (Levine & Nourse, 1998).

Chapter Three: Methodology

Overview of Methodology

The purpose of this study was to conduct a post-school outcomes study with former students who have participated in a transition program at the Kingsbury Center in Washington, DC. In special education, transition programs have been developed to provide services to students seeking a seamless transition from high school to the postsecondary environment. The IDEA 2004 defined transition services as:

A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

(a) is designed to be a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(b) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and

(c) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. [(34 CFR 300.43 (a)) [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

In IDEA 2004, Indicator 14 stipulated that schools are required to follow-up with students one year after exiting from high school to determine their postsecondary outcomes.

Indicator 14—Percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were:

- (a) Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school.
- (b) Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school.
- (c) Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Follow-up studies have been conducted in special education in the last 30 years. In 1990, Halpern conducted a methodological review of follow-up and follow-along studies tracking students with disabilities leaving high school to postsecondary life. There is a difference between follow-up and follow-along studies. Halpern defined follow-up studies as:

- Cross-sectional, collecting information on outcomes at only a single point in time, and
- Retrospective, collecting predictor information at the same time that outcome information is collected;

and follow-along studies as:

- Longitudinal, collecting outcome information at multiple points in time, and
- Prospective, collecting predictor information at one point in time and outcome information at subsequent points in time (p. 14-16).

Follow-up studies are the most frequently used design for post-school outcomes studies.

This study followed up students with LD who participated in a transition program at the

Kingsbury Center in the District of Columbia. The methodology consisted of conducting telephone interviews with former high school students using a valid post-school outcomes survey instrument, revised through a validation process, from the Indicator 14 post-school outcomes survey from the NPSO Center.

Context

The Kingsbury Center is a K-12 private special education school in the District of Columbia. The majority of the high school students who attend are referred to the Kingsbury Center by the DCPS. Students who are diagnosed with LD from DCPS and attend Kingsbury Center require special services and their tuition is then paid by DCPS. The students are identified as having a learning disability and require additional services that cannot be accommodated within DCPS. The Kingsbury Center provides additional services to students such as: (a) diagnostic and psychological services, (b) occupational and physical therapy, (c) speech and language services, and (d) tutoring services. In addition to their primary diagnosis, students may have one or more comorbid conditions such as: (a) attention deficit disorder (ADD)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), (b) dental health issues (e.g., anxiety, depression), (c) autism, or (d) emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD). Faculty and staff strive on a daily basis to understand and address the complexity of the student needs. All high school students are in a regular diploma track program and are encouraged to apply to college in their senior year.

To prepare students for the postsecondary environment, the Kingsbury Center developed the KTP, which included the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) program. In 2007, the KTP piloted the C.I.T.Y. program. Since the pilot year,

there have been 37 students who have participated in the C.I.T.Y. program. All students who participated were asked to participate in the survey. In addition, students who were a part of the KTP and not involved in the C.I.T.Y. project were also asked to participate. Former students responded to questions regarding their postsecondary school outcomes related to employment, education, and independent living (see Appendix E). The data were collected and evaluated from each cohort to account for differences in experiences since high school graduation (see Chapter 4). Studies have provided clear evidence that the amount of time that students are out of school has an effect on the outcome data (Newman, et al., 2011 & Seo et al., 2008). In addition, data results are presented cumulatively as well. The following sections of this chapter outline the research questions, research procedures, and ethical precautions.

Research Questions

The main questions the researcher sought to answer were:

- What are the post-school outcomes in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living of young adults with LD who participated in the KTP within the last three to five years since leaving from high school?
- How satisfied are young adults with LD with their quality of life in the postsecondary environment in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living within the last three to five years since leaving from high school?
- What aspects of the KTP are associated with the postsecondary outcomes, as perceived by young adults with LD?

These research questions have been decided based upon a literature review of longitudinal and follow-up transition studies evaluating outcomes of students with LD.

Research Procedures

Design

The research design of this follow-up study consisted of using the Post-School Outcome Data Collection Protocol Stage One and Post-School Data Collection Stage 2 from the NPSO Center to understand each student's post-school outcomes in the areas of education, employment, and/or independent living (Alverson et al., 2011; Falls & Unruh, 2010). The NPSO Center created these protocols as suggestions for states to use in obtaining Indicator 14 data. States are allowed to use and adapt these protocols (Alverson et al., 2011). The researcher obtained survey components from other school systems such as the study information letters (see Appendix D & E) from the Fairfax County Public Schools and the Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey. This follow-up study was split into two components: (a) validating the survey adapted from the NPSO Center and (b) interviewing the former Kingsbury students.

Creswell (2009) defined using a survey as a way of providing "...a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (p. 147). This study was designed to be a follow-up study to determine the post-school outcomes of students with LD. The focus was on the students and their post-school outcomes in the areas of employment, education, and independent living. The federal regulation of IDEA 2004, Indicator 14, required schools to follow-up with students with disabilities on their employment and education outcomes within a year of graduating from high school. For the purposes of this follow-up study, data collection

was assembled from each respective cohort regarding former students' observations of their transition experiences as well as assessing their current state of employment, education, and independent living.

In selecting this design, there are several benefits and limitations that have been identified in survey research. Telephone survey method is selected for data collection due to its ability to meet Indicator 14 requirements of IDEA 2004 as well as being an economical and efficient way to obtain responses from participants at one point in time (Creswell, 2009). Numerous states and school districts collect data for Indicator 14 through use of survey instruments (NPSO, 2011).

Alverson and colleagues (2010) reviewed 172 post-school outcome studies from 1975 to 2009 to find that surveying was the most used method in collecting post-school outcomes. The interviews by telephone or face-to-face is most commonly used methodology in collecting data (Alverson, Naranjo, Yamamoto, & Unruh, 2010). The selected telephone survey had been vetted and approved by OSEP at the U.S. Department of Education (Alverson et al., 2011). The NPSO Center protocols were developed based upon using these three sources: (a) current state post-school outcomes surveys, (b) NLTS2 data collection instrument, and (c) NPSO literature review on post-school outcomes studies (Alverson et al., 2011).

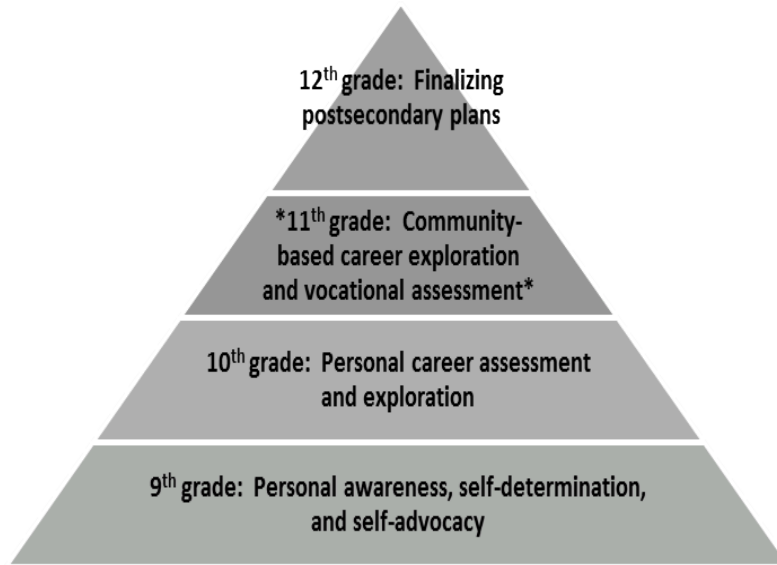
The collecting of quantitative data in a survey format allows for the study to be conducted in a timely and efficient manner (Creswell, 2009). Survey research can be susceptible to errors due to a lack of planning and execution throughout each phase of the research process (Alreck & Settle, 2004). It was important to plan ahead to avoid major errors to avoid casting doubt on the study (Alreck & Settle, 2004). One of the limitations

of the survey research is that it could face a nonresponse threat due to sensitive questioning asked of the participants (Alreck & Settle, 2004). Sensitive questions such as income and social habits can come across as too personal for participants to answer in an interview (Alreck & Settle, 2004).

This was a post-school outcomes study targeting former students who participated in the KTP and exited the Kingsbury Center. The Kingsbury Center developed a model comprehensive transition program for 9-12th graders (see Figure 6). Students completed a four-year curriculum that included school-based and work-based experiences. The KTP curriculum was incorporated into these one-semester transition courses:

- Personal Awareness (9th grade): self-aware in strengths, interests, and preferences; self-determined behaviors such as making choices, goal setting, organization; self-advocacy to help meet your needs now and in the future;
- Career Exploration (10th grade): developed awareness of careers and conducted career assessments to identify career and educational goals;
- Integrated Career Skills (11th grade): conducted community-based career exploration and vocational assessment to hone career and educational goals by participating in the Career for Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.); and
- Senior Seminar (12th grade): finalized post-graduation plans that met the students' employment, education, and independent living goals (Mattis et al., 2010, p. 4).

Figure 7: Kingsbury Center Transition Curriculum



(Mattis et al., 2010, p. 9)

Ongoing career and transition assessments were embedded into the KTP curriculum as well as into the C.I.T.Y. program. Every student participated in job-site visits and job shadowing. For the summer internship, a few students would be selected through an application process to participate in the paid internships. A study conducting a literature review of evidence-based secondary transition predictors for improving post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities found that paid employment made a difference in students post-school outcomes in the areas of education, employment, and independent living (Test, Mazzotti, Mustian, Fowler, Kortering, & Kohler, 2009). The population consisted of former students with LD who participated in and completed the KTP. A census was conducted due to the small population being studied. A small group of 56 young adults were invited to participate in the study. The population consisted of three cohorts of young adults from the graduating classes of 2009 (pilot), 2010, and 2011. Additional information such as demographic data of age, ethnicity, and gender were collected in the survey.

In the area of follow-up studies in transition, there are very few studies that solely focus on students with LD and their respective postsecondary outcomes as well as their personal perspectives of how the high school transition program impacted their postsecondary life. In some cases, follow-up studies would combine students with different disabilities in examining postsecondary outcomes (Levine & Nourse, 1998). Few studies have followed-up with students about the specific nature of their transition program within their high school setting and whether those transition services have enabled them to be successful or not in the postsecondary setting (e.g., employment, postsecondary education, independent living).

Sample

Due to the small and unique population, a sample was selected to include all members of each cohort. Alverson and colleagues (2010) reported in their literature synthesis that 19% of the follow-up studies used a sample from a school or program. There were three cohorts in the KTP who completed the C.I.T.Y program. There was a total of 56 former students who participated in the transition program and have left or graduated from Kingsbury. This study targeted this specific population because it is following up on post-school outcomes of students who participated in the KTP. The researcher collaborated with Kingsbury Center administrators in identifying and contacting the students who participated in the KTP. The sample population included:

- Young adults with language-based learning disabilities;
- Young adults who were high school students at the Kingsbury Center; and
- Young adults who have participated in the KTP.

Therefore, the sample population did not include:

- Young adults with a different disability;
- Young adults who are not high school students of the Kingsbury Center; and
- Young adults who did not participate in the in the KTP.

Response Rates

Follow-along and follow-up studies are encouraged to meet federal research guidelines for response rates. The NPSO Center recognized that the data is intended for practical purposes to improve state and district transition programs (Garrison-Mogren, 2007). Garrison-Mogren (2007), in advising states and districts about response rates and nonresponse bias, noted that states and districts, "...must use these data even if response rates are lower than federal funded research studies or when data are known to have measurable nonresponse bias" (2007, p.1). If the state and district have a low response rate, they must "...address problems of response rates, missing data, and bias" (Garrison-Mogren, 2007, p. 1).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2002), a federal entity, provided the response rates standards for survey research for various research projects and programs. The 2002 Statistical Standards and Guideline 2-2-2A outlined the requirement for a cross-sectional study to be used with follow-up studies: The required response rate has to be at 85% for each section of the data collection (NCES, 2002). There is not a response rate guideline for follow-up studies by OSEP to meet Indicator 14 requirements (Garrison-Mogren, 2007). The benefit of having a high response rate is that the study makes the outcomes more generalizable to the target population of the study

(Garrison-Mogren, 2007). Low response rates decrease the chances that inferences can be made about the target population (Garrison-Mogren, 2007).

A learning disability is defined as having a neurological disorder that impacts the brain's ability to retrieve, process, store, and respond to information (NCLD, 2010). These young adults struggle with language-based learning disabilities in the areas of reading, writing, and math. Due to the nature of the special education population, a telephone survey was conducted of all of the participants to ensure that all questions could easily be understood, and, if necessary, reworded for the participants. The telephone survey was designed to be user-friendly so the researcher could complete the survey in a timely and efficient manner. A user-friendly telephone survey was important to highlight the directions and questions as well as the respondents' answers to minimize errors. The transferring of respondent data into an Excel spreadsheet minimized data errors. In addition, each interview was transcribed to ensure all responses were interpreted and coded correctly. Those queried may choose not to participate in the follow-up survey because they may not remember the specific components of C.I.T.Y., feel apathetic towards the Kingsbury Center, and/or be embarrassed about their current situation in the postsecondary environment. To address these potential concerns, the researcher disclosed in the informed consent letter (see Appendix C) on the importance of participating in the follow-up study that allowed the Kingsbury Center to receive information about how former students are faring in the postsecondary environment.

Survey Instrument

Survey instrument. The follow-up telephone survey gathered information on three cohorts of young adults with LD who had exited from the Kingsbury Center. The

survey was organized to gather information on individual profiles and demographics (see Appendix E, Section B), high school experiences (see Appendix E, Section C), postsecondary education and training (see Appendix E, Section D), social service agencies (e.g., Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA), employment, and independent living) (see Appendix E, Section G), employment (see Appendix E, Section H), and independent living (Appendix E, Section K). The follow-up survey was adapted from two pre-existing survey protocols from the NPSO, a Post-School Outcome Data Collection Protocol Stage One and a Post-School Data Collection Stage 2. The questions were multiple choice and short answer. The interviewer read each question to the participant and marked each answer on the questionnaire. The researcher obtained survey components from other school systems, such as the study information letters (see Appendix D & E) from the Fairfax County Public Schools and the Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey.

The two pre-existing survey protocols were selected because the questions had been vetted and approved by OSEP and reflected the new Indicator 14 requirements for Part B of SPP APR (Alverson et al., 2011). States and districts currently use these two instruments to conduct post-school outcomes studies, which makes data collection easier and economical to use for this study. The two NPSO protocols were adapted for this study's telephone survey due to these factors:

- OSEP approved the follow-up survey to be used as a model for State Education Agencies (SEA);
- The two instruments met the new Indicator 14 requirements for Part B of SPP and the APR;

- The two instruments were developed from a variety of sources: (a) current state post-school outcomes surveys (b) NLTS2 data collection instrument, and (c) NPSO literature review on post-school outcomes studies (Alverson et al., 2011).
- The follow-up surveys can be easily used and adapted over the telephone.
- The interviewer can collect the data in timely and efficient manner. It was estimated that each participant would take 30 minutes to complete the survey; and
- The high school experiences, postsecondary, employment, and independent living questions related directly back to the study research questions.

Reliability and Validity. In survey research, validity was defined as that it “...represents what it intends and claims to represent” (Wiersma, n.d., p. 2). The NPSO interview protocols have merged Indicator 14 questions from three sources: (a) current state post school outcome surveys, (b) NLTS-2, and (c) NPSO literature review on post-school outcome studies. The researcher struggled to find information on the reliability and validity of the NPSO protocols. Therefore, the researcher contacted NPSO by email to obtain information in regards to the validity and reliability of the protocols. A contact from the NPSO informed the researcher that the protocols have not been tested for reliability or validity (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012). An NPSO staff emailed a response to the researcher:

I am writing in response to your request to use one of the National Post-school Outcomes products located on our website (i.e., Post-school Outcomes Data Collection Protocols, Stage One and Two). These protocols were developed through our funding with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, as a model for State Education Agency as they developed

their post-school outcomes data collection systems. You are welcome to use these protocols as is or adapt them to suit your needs. I must caution you that these protocols have not undergone any testing for reliability or validity (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012).

To achieve content validation, the researcher conducted three expert panels reviews: external panel, internal panel, and research methodologist panel. Again, validity is defined as measuring "...what it is supposed to" (Carrol, 2011, p. 1). Instrument validity can be established through an expert evaluation (Carrol, 2011).

Instrument validity. To obtain instrument validity, a set of procedures was put into place before the expert panels reviewed the instrument. Expert panels validated the instrument through content validity. Content validity measures "...whether items on an instrument adequately measure a desired domain of content" (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 269). Face validity is defined as "...items must reflect what they are intended to measure" in an instrument evaluation (Hardesty & Bearden, 2004). Individuals who are not experts validated the instrument through face validity. The researcher, to ensure content and face validity of the instrument, conducted a four-step review process using expert panels (e.g., external, internal, research methodologist panel) and a pilot test.

Content validity. Content validation is "...the determination of the content representativeness or content relevance of the elements/items of an instrument by the application of a two-stage (development or judgment) process" (Lynn, 1986, p. 382). The instrument development stage consisted of domain identification and item generation (Grant & Davis, 1997). Judgment-quantification is the identification of expert panelists

and the process of evaluating the instrument by each item and as whole unit (Grant & Davis, 1997; Lynn, 1986).

Development. Domain identification is "...accomplished through a thorough review of the literature on the topic of the measure so that all dimensions and subdimensions can be identified" (Lynn, 1986, p. 383). The instrument for this study has been adapted from the NPSO protocols, which were developed from three main sources: (a) current state post-school outcomes surveys; (b) NLTS2 data collection instrument; and (c) NPSO literature review on post-school outcomes studies (Alverson et al., 2011). The NPSO literature review provided guidance to instrument development of the NPSO protocols. Alverson and colleagues (2006) identified the transition domains and the subdimensions that eventually led the NPSO staff to develop two post-school outcome instruments.

Alverson and colleagues (2006) conducted the NPSO literature review that investigated the methodology used for conducting post-school outcomes follow-up studies. In their review (N=98), post-school outcomes were identified in these transition domains: employment, post-secondary education, and independent/quality of life (Alverson, Bayliss, Naranjo, Yamamoto, and Unruh, 2006). The researchers identified multiple variables of measurement within each transition domain (Alverson et al., 2006). There were seven employment variables in the post-school outcome studies (N=92):

- Income earned or other financial questions (e.g., earnings report by yearly, quarterly, monthly, weekly, hourly, piece rate);
- Type or kinds of jobs held (e.g., competitive, sheltered, retail, food services, etc.);

- Employment status (e.g., paid/unpaid, engaged/unengaged, volunteer services, unemployed);
- Number of hours worked (e.g., full- or part-time, seasonal);
- Types of benefits (e.g., vacation, retirement, sick leave, and major medical/dental insurance);
- Job stability (e.g., length of time on the job, number of jobs, advancements, fired, laid off, quit); and
- Miscellaneous (e.g., job satisfaction, military, how a job was obtained, etc.) (Alverson et al., 2006, p. 7).

The literature review identified four post-secondary education outcomes in the post-school outcome studies (N=68):

- Kind of institutions attended (e.g., 2- and 4-year institutes, vocational/trade schools, community colleges, all public institutes of higher education);
- Enrollment rates (e.g., engagement, years attended, training);
- Degree/certificate completion rates (e.g., types of degrees sought, field of study); and
- Other (e.g., completion of GED, types of classes taken, classes enrolled in but did not pass, etc.) (Alverson et al., 2006, p. 8).

Alverson and colleagues (2006, p. 8) identified six independent living outcomes in the post-school outcome studies (N=63):

- Living status (e.g., on own, roommates, family, supervised living, military barracks, dorm, etc.);
- Community involvement (e.g., voting, transportation, etc.);

- Social relationships (e.g., leisure activities);
- Assistance (e.g., public assistance, accessing services, services received);
- Finances (e.g., ability to pay bills, family income, etc.); and
- Other (e.g., legal issues, family status, satisfaction).

The literature review of post-school outcome studies contributed towards the first stage of content validation (developmental) for the NSPSO protocols. The researcher has adapted from both NPSO protocols to develop the instrument for this study.

Judgment-quantification. The second stage of content validation is judgment-quantification (Lynn, 1986). Judgment-quantification identified a set number of experts to review the instrument to determine the content validity (Lynn, 1986). Expert panelists need to be chosen selectively by the researcher (Davis, 1992; Grant & Davis, 1997).

Davis (1992) described expert panelists as having “...documented clinical experience with the target population; achieved professional certification in a related topic area; presented professional papers on the topic area at state, regional, and/or national professional meetings; published papers on the topic area in regional or national resources; or initiated research on the topic area” (p. 194). Expert panelists can include professionals from the field as well as theoretical or conceptual framework experts (Davis, 1992). In addition, methodologist experts can be resourceful in providing their expertise in the format and “...structural aspects of instrument construction” (Davis, 1992).

Expert review. Three expert panels (e.g., external, internal, and research methodologist) reviewed the instrument adapted from the two NPSO protocols. The external panel consisted of national experts in the field of Special Education who

specialized in transition and career development. The following external experts are familiar with transition, Indicator 14, and career development:

- Dr. Michelle (Mickey) Wircenski, Professor of Applied Technology and Performance Improvement, University of North Texas (National Transition Specialist);
- Dr. George Tilson, Jr., Senior Vice President, TransCen, Rockville, Md. (National Transition Specialist and Author);
- Dr. Richard Luecking, President of TransCen, Rockville, Md, & Consultant to the Office Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Department of Labor, Washington, DC (National Transition Specialist);
- Ms. Stephanie Corbey, Director Individualized Student Services, Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools, Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area (Transition Facilitator SEA and LEA); and
- Dr. Jeanne Repetto, Associate Professor of School of Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies, University of Florida (National Transition Specialist).

The internal panel consisted of experts connected or partnered with the Graduate School of Education and Human Development at GWU. The following internal experts are familiar with transition, Indicator 14, and the KTP:

- Dr. Juliana Taymans, Professor of Special Education and Disability Studies, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington University;

- Dr. Lynda West, Professor Emeritus of Special Education and Disability Studies, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington University;
- Dr. Elizabeth Shook, Program Specialist, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC (Transition, Technology, and Legal Specialist); and
- Ms. Christine Pilgrim, former Transition Specialist, Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland.

The last expert panel consisted of methodologist experts who reviewed the survey to enhance its structural development. The following methodologist experts reviewed for potential bias and logistical issues:

- Dr. Sharon Dannels, Associate Professor of Educational Research, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington University, Washington, DC;
- Dr. Edward Vitelli, Research Project Director, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, The George Washington University, Washington, DC; and
- Dr. Nisha Manikoth, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Department of Educational Leadership, The George Washington University, Washington, DC.

Expert review process. Grant and Davis (1997) outlined the expert review process to ensure that reviewers have a clear understanding of the conceptual definitions and measurement model of the instrument. The researcher provided reviewers the conceptual definitions as well as “...the standards, objectives, or decision criteria that will serve as a

basis for scoring the instrument” (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 271). The conceptual definitions referred to the “...relevant dimensions of the construct to be operationalized in the instrument” (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 270). In this study, the conceptual definitions referred to the transition domains: employment, postsecondary education, and independent/quality of life.

Experts needed to review the instrument for item content, item style, and comprehensiveness (Grant & Davis, 1997). Item content and item style focused on the individual components of the instrument. Comprehensiveness concentrated on the entire instrument. Item content centered on how representative the questions were in meeting the content domain in all dimensions (Grant & Davis, 1997). Lynn (1986) recommended that all expert reviewers assess areas of omission as well as provide suggestions for improving the instrument items to ensure that the instrument is aligned with the domains. Item style is defined as reviewing the instrument for “...clarity of item construction and wording” (Grant & Davis, 1997). Expert panelists had the opportunity to provide input on the instruments clarity and wording. It was recommended by Grant & Davis (1997) that expert reviewers evaluate the entire instrument for comprehensiveness. The assessment on the comprehensiveness of an instrument allowed reviewers to “...evaluate whether the complete set of instrument items is sufficient to represent the total content domain” (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 271). The expert reviewers evaluated the instrument to determine that the overall items represented the transition content domains. The researcher added or removed items based on the alignment with the transition content domains (Grant & Davis, 1997).

Expert protocol. Grant and Davis (1997) advised researchers to develop a methodological and efficient system in collecting information from expert reviewers. The researcher incorporated Grant and Davis's (1997) suggestions to develop collection materials for expert panelists to reduce bias: (a) explanatory cover letter, (b) reviewer instructions, (c) definitions of terms, and (d) a review instrument protocol. The cover letter outlined the reviewer's instructions and the definitions of terms. The review instrument protocol was developed to ensure the representativeness, clarity, and comprehensiveness of the instrument (Grant & Davis, 1997).

- Cover letter—Expert reviewers received a cover letter that included the following: (see Appendix A):
 - Explanation of panelist selection based on professional qualifications;
 - Importance of evaluating the instrument and how it can help the researcher and the field;
 - Addressed the conceptual foundations and review protocol;
 - Highlighted the need for representativeness of the questions;
 - Described the transition domains and respective dimensions (see Appendix A, Form A);
 - Sought clarity of the questions as it relates to the transition domains;
 - Requested suggestions on question items;
 - Evaluated for comprehensiveness of the entire instrument as it relates to the transition domains; and
 - Requested comprehensiveness feedback to insert or remove question items (Sudman & Bradburn, 1982, as cited in Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 271).

- Review instrument protocol—Expert reviewers received a review instrument protocol that measured the survey instrument for representativeness, clarity, and comprehensiveness. The review instrument protocol was presented to reviewers as follows (see Appendix A, Form B):
 - Provided well-defined expectations and directions in addressing the representativeness, clarity, and comprehensiveness of the instrument;
 - Essential terms were highlighted to ensure that each item on the instrument was aligned to transition domains and respective dimensions:
 - Representativeness—the item reflects, samples, and measures the transition domains (e.g., employment, post-secondary education, and independent/quality of life),
 - Clarity—Are the items well-written, distinct, and appropriate for young adults with learning disabilities? and
 - Comprehensiveness—all dimensions of the transition domains is included in the instrument; and
 - Suggestions were requested from the expert reviewers in improving the questions for item review and comprehensiveness (Grant & Davis, 1997).

Interrater Agreement. For each round of expert reviews, the researcher conducted an interrater agreement (IR). The IR measured representativeness by calculating “...the number of agreements among content experts...divided by the total number of items on the instrument” (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 272). The standard score for the IR must fall in the range of .70 to .80 (Davis, 1992; Martuza, 1977). Expert reviewers must reach 70% to 80% agreement on the validity of the content of the instrument. The external expert panel

was found to be in 86% agreement. The internal expert panel was found to be in 100% agreement. The research methodology panel did not score each question because the subject was outside their area of expertise. They simply evaluated the survey to provide feedback on the structural components of the instrument.

Index of Content Validity. The second step was to calculate the index of content validity (CVI) for each of the three rounds of expert review. The CVI analyzed and evaluated the expert scores. Martuza (1977) describes the CVI as using a "...four-point rating scale (e.g., 1 = not relevant, 2 = somewhat relevant, 3 = quite relevant, and 4 = very relevant) (p. 285). CVI is judged by a plurality of scores at a 3 or 4 provided by experts (Grant & Davis, 1997). Davis (1992) counseled researchers to pursue a content validity index of .80. The external expert panel achieved a CVI of 86%. The internal expert panel obtained a CVI of 100%. As stated earlier, the research methodology panel did not score each question and simply provided feedback on the structural components of the instrument. The revised instrument was developed to undergo a pilot test to measure face validity.

Pilot Test. Face validity (FV) was conducted through a pilot test. Nevo (1985) defined FV as "...asking people to rate the validity of a test as it appears to them" (p. 288). Nevo (1985) recommended that experts should not be used to conduct FV. There are three groups of individuals that could measure any instrument for FV: (a) individuals who take the instrument, (b) individuals who apply the outcomes or conclusions of the instrument (e.g., administrators), or (c) individuals from the populace who are interested (Nevo, 1985). In this study, the individuals who measured FV have been involved in the

KTP and are interested in the outcomes of the study. The following individuals were selected:

- Ms. Lindsey Anderson, Transition Specialist, The Kingsbury Center, Washington, DC (Transition Coordinator for the KTP);
- Ms. Jessica Mattis, Former Kingsbury Transition Specialist, Pennsylvania;
- Ms. Jessica Lux, Head of Junior High Division, The Lab School, Washington, DC (Former Upper School Director at Kingsbury Center);
and
- Mr. Ryan Easterly, Manager, National Youth Transitions Center at the HSC Foundation, Washington, DC.

FV protocol. The researcher followed the Grant and Davis (1997) suggestions to develop collection materials to reduce the opportunity for bias (e.g., explanatory cover letter, reviewer instructions, definitions of terms, review instrument protocol). The cover letter outlined the FV instructions and the definitions of terms for the FV instrument protocol, which was developed to collect feedback on the suitability and unsuitability of the instrument (Nevo, 1985).

- Cover letter—The FV reviewers each received a cover letter that included the following (See Appendix B):
 - Explanation of panelist selection based upon interest in the study;
 - Importance of evaluating the instrument and how it can help the researcher and the field;
 - Addressed conceptual foundations and FV review protocol (See Appendix B, Form A);

- Described the transition domains;
 - Described the absolute technique method and rating scale for FV; and
 - Requested suggestions on individual items (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 271).
- FV instrument protocol—Expert reviewers received a FV instrument protocol that measured the survey instrument on a 5-point scale, from suitability to unsuitability. The FV instrument protocol was presented to reviewers as follows (See Appendix B, Form B):
 - The reviewers assessed each instrument item and the instrument as a whole using the absolute technique method of measurement. The absolute technique method involved assessing each instrument item on a 5-point scale (Nevo, 1985, p. 289):
 - 5—the instrument and instrument items are extremely suitable for a given purpose,
 - 4—the instrument and instrument items are very suitable for that purpose,
 - 3—the instrument and instrument items are adequate,
 - 2—the instrument and instrument items are inadequate, and
 - 1—the instrument and instrument items are irrelevant or unsuitable;
 - Essential terms were highlighted to reviewers to ensure that each item on the instrument and the whole instrument were aligned to transition domains and its elements; and

- Suggestions were requested from the FV reviewers to improve the instrument items and the instrument as a whole.

FV Interrater Agreement. After receiving the FV protocols, the researcher conducted an IR, which for FV followed the same calculation as IR for content validity. IR was calculated by "...the number of agreements" found by FV reviewers "...divided by the total number of items on the instrument" (Grant & Davis, 1997, p. 272). The IR score must fall in the range of .70 to .80 (Davis, 1992; Martuza, 1977). For this FV test, the IR score was .90. Once the IR was achieved, the researcher began the process of contacting the Kingsbury cohorts.

Data collection procedures. The researcher conducted the interview by using hard copy of the telephone survey. To provide confidentiality, the telephone survey was randomly coded for each participant (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance). All hard copies of the interviews and recordings remained in a locked file in the researcher's home. The list of the participant names and codes was kept in password protected excel spreadsheet separate from the interview data (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance). The digital recordings were uploaded into the interviewer's computer into a password-protected program to ensure confidentiality. Participants were informed that the telephone interviews would be recorded in the informed consent letter (see Appendix C). Each participant received an informed consent letter from GWU and a study information letter from the CEO of the Kingsbury Center. The researcher in collaboration with the Kingsbury Center staff followed these data collection procedures:

- 1) Round One: Kingsbury Center staff contacted participants from each cohort through mail, email, and social media to provide the GWU and Kingsbury Center letters on letterhead to inform participants of the opportunity to participate in a follow-up telephone survey (see Appendix C & D). The Kingsbury Center staff informed the participants how to contact the researcher. All young adults with LD were 18 years or older and did not need parental/guardian consent.
- 2) Round Two: Kingsbury Center staff contacted the non-responsive participants from each cohort by mail, email, and social media to provide a second set of letters from GWU and the Kingsbury Center on letterheads to inform participants of the opportunity to participate in a follow-up telephone survey (see Appendix C & D). The Kingsbury Center staff informed the participants how to contact the researcher. The researcher, along with the Kingsbury Center Staff, recruited participants on Kingsbury Alumni Night.
- 3) Round Three: Kingsbury Center staff contacted the non-responsive participants from each cohort by mail, email, and social media to provide the third set of letters from GWU and Kingsbury Center on letterhead stationary to inform participants of the opportunity to participate in a follow-up telephone survey (see Appendix C & D). Kingsbury Center staff informed the participants of how to contact the researcher.
- 4) The researcher followed-up with the individual participants who agreed to participate and set up an interview time that was convenient for the participant (see Appendix E).

- 5) The researcher conducted the follow-up telephone interviews with all participants at the appointed interview time.

For participants who were difficult to reach by traditional means, the Kingsbury Center staff used alternative methods to contact students, as recommended by Smith and Bost (2007):

- Contacted family members through mail, email, and telephone to obtain updated contact information on former students;
- Communicated with Kingsbury teachers to assist in contacting former students;
- Contacted former students through other forms of social media (e.g., www.myspace.com and www.classmates.com); and
- Obtained the contact information from the Kingsbury administrative personnel to obtain the most current contact information on former student.

Data Analysis

Data Edits, Data Entry Procedures, and Data Transformations. The majority of the survey questions were quantitative acquiring nominal data. There were eight open-ended questions regarding specific aspects of the KTP. Interviews were conducted from December 2013 through January 2014, and the researcher kept a detailed record of how many interviews were attempted, how many attempts were made to contact participants, and how many have been completed (Alreck & Settle, 2004). During the interview, the researcher documented and noted participant response on the survey form. A transcript of the interviews was used for verification that the researcher accurately documented the participant response on the survey form. To ensure accuracy, all of the interviewees were selected to verify that the transcript was consistent with the completed form. Once

interviews were completed, computer files of survey data and the digital recordings were created to ensure that all files were updated and collected properly (Alreck & Settle, 2004).

Each questionnaire was identified with a number that was directly linked to the participant. The identification number was used on the physical survey as well as in the data file. The questionnaires were sorted into three cohorts based on the exit year: 2009, 2010, and 2011. The survey branched into different categories based upon the participant's responses. The recordings were used as a back up in the event data was missed or unclear on the survey form.

Preliminary data handling. Due to the small population, this project required only one interviewer. The interviewer was a doctoral student who had been closely involved in the C.I.T.Y. program from 2007-2010. Therefore, steps were taken to ensure reliability and so that validity of the research was not threatened throughout the data collection process. To ensure the integrity of the research data, the following procedures were implemented:

- 1) The interviewer followed the recommendations of the dissertation committee in providing a reliable and valid survey that was appropriate for a telephone interview.
 - a. The interviewer consulted expert panels and conducted pilot test of the survey to determine its strengths and weaknesses.
 - b. The interviewer revised the survey based on the feedback of the expert panels, pilot test, and the dissertation committee recommendations.

- 2) The interviewer submitted a proposal for IRB and GSEHD Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for approval to conduct research on human subjects (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance).
- 3) The interviewer noted that all telephone interviews would be digitally recorded on the informed consent forms, and all interviews were digitally recorded, bringing integrity and honesty into the data collection process.

Data analysis. In IDEA 2004, Indicator 14 stipulated that schools are required to follow-up with students one year after exit from high school to determine their postsecondary outcomes. This study followed-up with former students to determine their postsecondary outcomes within three to five years after leaving high school.

Indicator 14—Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school, and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school. (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Therefore, this study was designed to follow-up with students with LD who have participated in a transition program at the Kingsbury Center. There were three discrete cohorts of young adults with LD, those exiting in 2009, 2010, and 2011. Data was analyzed and evaluated based upon participant answers in the following survey categories: profile and demographics, high school experiences, postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Cumulative and cohort data was converted into percentages to highlight the differences between classes as well as present an overall picture of this group of students with LD (see Chapter 4). In addition, based on responses,

survey participants fell into one of these categories outlined in the IDEA Indicator 14 data measurement:

- A. Percent enrolled in higher education = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education within one year, two years, or three years) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.12).
- B. Percent enrolled in higher education or competitively employed = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year, two years, or three years of leaving high school) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13).
- C. Percent enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment = [(# of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school and were enrolled in higher education, or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year, two years, or three years) divided by the (# of respondent youth who are no longer in secondary

school and had IEPs in effect at the time they left school)] times 100 (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13).

As shared in the expert panels and pilot test, Indicator 14 defined enrollment in higher education, competitive employment, enrolled in other postsecondary education or training, and some other employment to achieve understanding and uniformity across states and school districts (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). These terms provided guidelines for states and districts seeking clarity on what it means to be in higher education and/or competitively employed. The terms defined below is outlined in the most recent SPP/APR Indicator Measurement Table:

- *Enrolled in higher education* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program) or college/university (4- or more year program) for at least one complete term, at anytime in the year since leaving school (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13).
- *Competitive employment* means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13).
- *Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g. Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a 2-year program) (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13).

- *Some other employment* means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services) (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p.13-14).

Data Results. The researcher used a percentage formula from each cohort on the reported outcomes in higher education, employment, and independent living. In addition, the researcher analyzed data provided by each cohort about student experiences in the KTP and the C.I.T.Y. programs. The results were analyzed and categorized on the three discrete cohorts of young adults with LD: 2009, 2010, and 2011. Results indicated the specific categories in which students fell with regards to Indicator 14. The results demonstrated how many youth were enrolled in higher education, competitively employed, and enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program, and/or some other employment. The data were analyzed and evaluated based on participant answers in the survey questionnaire that answered the research questions of the study as well as provide information required by IDEA 2004 (see Chapter 4).

Human Participants and Ethics Precautions

The researcher disclosed her prior relationship with the C.I.T.Y. program. The researcher was a teacher at the Kingsbury Center from 2007-2009. The interviewer had a professional relationship with most of the former students and parents involved in the KTP. As a doctoral student, in 2010, the researcher was the liaison between GWU and Kingsbury in connecting employers and students for career exploration activities. The researcher disclosed the close and personal connection to the program as well as took steps to ensure honesty and integrity of the data collected, such as conducting three

expert panel reviews and a pilot test to ensure that reliability and validity of research study and instruments. In addition, the researcher, upon interview completion, compiled digital recordings and reviewed the interview transcripts to ensure all data were transferred correctly.

The study was designed to assess the postsecondary outcome of students who participated the C.I.T.Y. program; some of the survey questions might trigger emotional trauma or feelings of embarrassment regarding their post-school outcomes. The informed consent form included request for permission to use "...poignant quotes that might identify the participant" (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance). If there were any responses that the participant did not want the interviewer to publicly quote, the participant's request was honored. Due to the relationship of researcher and the participants, the researcher reassured the participants if they began to feel embarrassed during the interview. The interviewer safeguarded the data by removing "...direct identifiers such as name, address..." (Singer, 2008, p. 93). The telephone survey was randomly coded and pseudonym was created for each participant (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance). The telephone interview was conducted at the interviewer's home when no family members were at home. The researcher did not start recording the interview until the pseudonym name had been created. Therefore, no identifiable information would have been collected or recorded that would link back to the participant's actual name on the survey instrument or in the digital recordings.

All hard copies of the interviews and digital interview recordings remained in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's home. The list of the pseudonym names and codes were kept in password protected excel spreadsheet separate from the interview data (Dannels, 2011, Survey Research Methods Course #8130, Session 9: Ethical Conduct and IRB Clearance). To ensure confidentiality, all digital recordings uploaded to the computer were placed into password-protected electronic security files. A transcription company that only knew the pseudonym names completed the data transcription of the interviews. The interviewer's personal computer is password protected and the data information stored on the computer had password protection. Only the interviewer had access to the personal computer and the password-protected software. Once the research was completed, all hard copies with participant responses were shredded in the researcher's home. The researcher deleted all electronic data files that were saved on the computer.

Chapter Four: Results of Follow-up Study

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to: (a) report on the postsecondary outcomes (e.g., education, employment, and independent living) of former Kingsbury students with LD, (b) gain insight on their levels of satisfaction, and (c) receive feedback to determine if they perceived the Kingsbury Transition Program (KTP) and the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) assisted in helping them work towards postsecondary outcomes. The conceptual framework of the career development theories provided: (a) the foundation of the KTP and (b) the lens to guide the development of a reviewed post-school outcomes survey specific to this group of students. Super (1990) developed the theory that career development happens across an individual's lifespan. This follow-up study was conducted to glean a deeper insight, at one point in time, to determine how each cohort was faring since they graduated or left high school with an understanding that career development is fluid and happens across the lifespan. The KTP was designed to create opportunities for students with LD to have career exploration and work-based learning experiences, based on individual interests and preferences. In coordination with the Kingsbury Center staff, interviews were conducted with former high school students with LD regarding their post-school outcomes.

Demographics/Participants

Process of Recruitment. A total of 56 participants were invited to participate in the follow-up study. The Associate Director of Admissions from the Kingsbury Center conducted the outreach of former high school students. The Associate Director contacted all former students by mail, email, phone, and social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) for

all three rounds of outreach. In each round, students received a letter from Kingsbury highlighting the study and an informed-consent letter. It was up to them to contact the researcher by phone or email. In addition, the CEO and Head of School approved the researcher to attend Kingsbury’s Alumni Program reception to recruit former students to participate in the study. In Table 6, each round is highlighted by the number of young adults interviewed, who agreed to interview but decided not to follow through to interview, and decided not to be interviewed. A total of 28 students did respond to the interview requests (see Table 6). However, the other 28 students did not respond to any of the inquiries regarding a follow-up interview. Each round, including Alumni reception, produced a total of 16 interviews that generated a 29% response rate. Due to the small sample, there is an increased risk of nonresponse bias meaning that the answers or outcomes shared by the sample might not truly represent the total population.

Table 6
Recruitment Response

	Interviews	Yes, but no follow through	No
Round 1	7	0	3
Round 2	5	2	2
Round 3	1	1	1
Alumni Night	3	3	0
Totals	16	6	6

Participants. Three cohorts participated in this study from the classes of 2009, 2010, and 2011. Initially, a census was desired but a sample was achieved in this study. The sample was evaluated to determine if the sample was representative of the total population. Race and gender were the only two variables examined due to the information collected from the Kingsbury Center and student interviews. The researcher only had information on 47 of the 56 in the population on race and gender. The sample

can be different from the population in other areas such as socioeconomic status and disability (i.e., secondary disability). This information was not collected in the student interviews.

By examining the distribution of gender it does appear that the sample closely resembles the population (see Table 7). As far as the distribution of race, it appears that the sample shares similarities with population with the exception of those individuals who identify as white (see Table 11). As shared in Chapter 3, the Kingsbury students are identified as having a primary diagnosis of having a language-based learning disability. In addition to the primary diagnosis, students might also have a secondary diagnosis such as (a) Autism, (b) Developmental Delay, (c) Emotional Disturbance, (d) Hearing Impairment, (e) Intellectual Disability, (f) Multiple Disabilities, (g) Orthopedic Impairment, (h) Speech or Language Impairment, (i) Traumatic Brain Injury, and/or (j) Visual Impairment (OSSE, 2014). From 2009-2011 cohorts, 16 young adults participated in interviews. There were a higher number of males than females (see Table 7). The average age from all cohorts was 22 years ($M=21.56$, $SD =1.06$). Collectively, the 16 young adults identified with the following races: African American (69%, $n=11$), Hispanic/Latino (6%, $n=1^1$), White (6%, $n=1$), Asian (6%, $n=1$), two or more races (6%, $n=1$), and preferred not to be identified by race (12%, $n=2$) (see Table 11). The majority of young adults (94%, $n=15$) graduated from the Kingsbury Center. A student (6%, $n=1$) from the 2009 cohort did not graduate from the center.

¹ A student identified as Hispanic/Latino as well as two or more races. In Table 11, the student is counted only once as identifying with the “two or more races” category.

The 2009 cohort consisted of four young adults who identified themselves as male and female (see Table 8). The average age for this cohort was 23 ($M=22.5$, $SD=1.22$). The young adults with LD identified themselves as African Americans; others preferred not to be identified by race (see Table 12). The 2009 cohort was not evenly distributed by race, there was no former student who identified as white (see Table 12). The 2009 class population identified with two races: African American and White (see Table 12). The 2010 cohort included three young adult men with an average age of 22 years ($M=22.0$, $SD=0$). The 2010 cohort was not evenly distributed by gender. There were no former students who identified as female (see Table 9). The young adult men classified themselves as African American and White (see Table 13). The 2011 cohort was a slightly larger group with nine young adults with an average age of 21 years ($M=21.0$, $SD=1.15$). Similar to other cohorts, there were more young adult males than females (see Table 10). Young adults identified themselves as African American, Asian, and two or more races (see Table 14). The sample compared to the population of the 2011 class did not have any student that identified as white (see Table 14).

Table 7
Gender (Population v. Sample)

Gender	Population	Sample
Male	34 (72%)	12 (75%)
Female	13 (28%)	4 (25%)
Total	47*	16

*The information is missing for the other nine students.

Table 8
Gender (2009 Class Population v. 2009 Cohort Sample)

Gender	2009 Class Population	2009 Sample
Male	12 (80%)	3 (75%)
Female	3 (20%)	1 (25%)
Total	15	4

Table 9
Gender (2010 Class Population v. 2010 Cohort Sample)

Gender	2010 Class Population	2010 Sample
Male	11 (73%)	3 (100%)
Female	4 (27%)	0
Total	15	3

Table 10
Gender (2011 Class Population v. 2011 Cohort Sample)

Gender	2011 Class Population	2011 Sample
Male	11 (65%)	6 (67%)
Female	6 (35%)	3 (33%)
Total	17	9

Table 11
Race (Population v Sample)

Race	Population	Sample
African American	31 (66%)	11 (69%)
White	14 (30%)	1 (6%)
Asian	1 (2%)	1 (6%)
Two or More Races	1 (2%)	1 (6%)
No Answer	0	2 (12%)
Total	47	16

Table 12
Race (2009 Class Population v. 2009 Cohort Sample)

Race	2009 Class Population	2009 Sample
African American	8 (53%)	2 (50%)
White	7 (47%)	0
Asian	0	0
Two or More Races	0	0
No Answer	0	2 (50%)
Total	15	4

Table 13
Race (2010 Class Population v. 2010 Cohort Sample)

Race	2010 Class Population	2010 Sample
African American	8 (53%)	2 (67%)
White	6 (40%)	1 (33%)
Asian	0	0
Two or More Races	1 (7%)	0
No Answer	0	0
Total	15	3

Table 14
Race (2011 Class Population v. 2011 Cohort Sample)

Race	2011 Class Population	2011 Sample
African American	15 (88%)	7 (77%)
White	1 (6%)	0
Asian	1 (6%)	1 (11%)
Two or More Races	0	1 (11%)
No Answer	0	0
Total	17	9

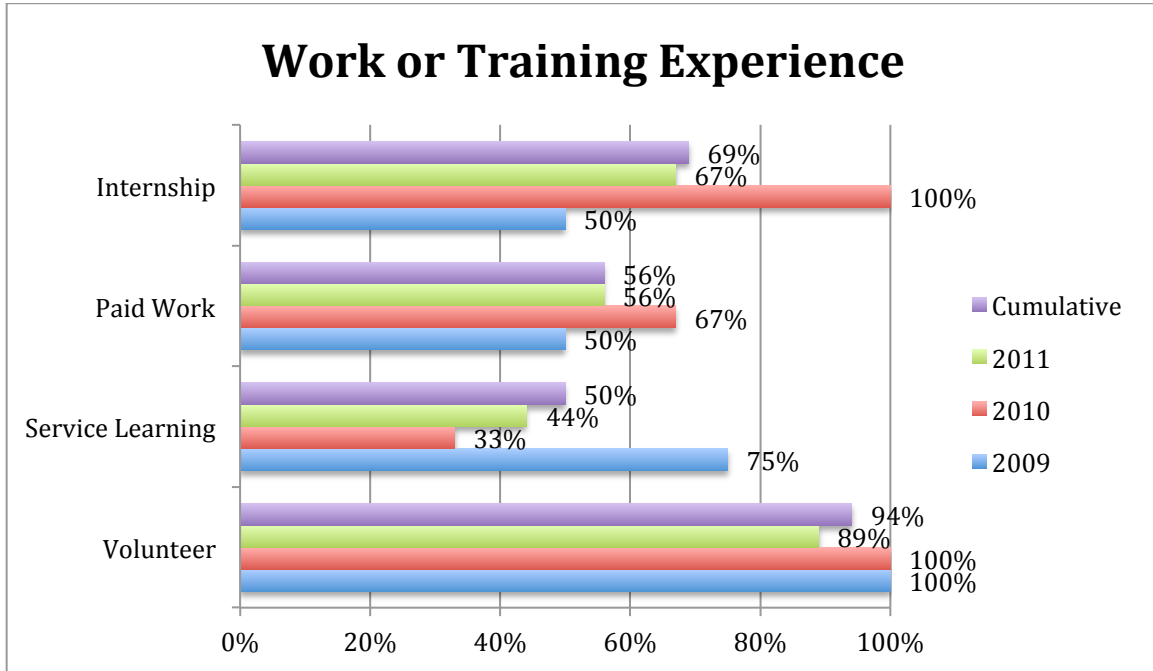
High School Experience/Background

Former students revisited their Kingsbury high school experiences, including their Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and postsecondary goals. A requirement of IDEA 2004 is that all students are to be invited to their IEP meeting if the purpose of the meeting is to discuss transition goals from high school to postsecondary life. All the students (100%, N=16) attended their IEP meetings while they were at Kingsbury. An overwhelming majority of students (94%, n=15) actively participated and contributed to their IEP meetings. There was one student (6%, n=1) from the 2009 cohort who did not actively participate or contribute to his/her IEP meeting. A few students provided additional insight with regards to their participation. Miles (2010) shared that he did not introduce himself at the meeting but he did share his opinions. Jake (2010) noted how he was confused at the beginning of the IEP meetings but would try to answer questions. Eventually, he became comfortable in the meetings. Sue (2011) commented that she would have liked to have been more involved in her meetings, stating that she was involved in about half while her parents were involved in the rest of the meetings. Muslin (2009) stated that she did not actively participate in her IEP meetings. The majority of students (88%, n=14) did not lead their IEP meetings. There were two students (12%, n=2) from the 2011 cohort who reported that they led their IEP meetings.

Jake (2010) believed that being in charge of his IEP meeting was not "...within my power to do so." He believed that the power of facilitating the IEP meeting belonged to the individuals in the department.

Figure 8 highlights the work or training experiences that students participated in while enrolled in high school. Former students were asked if they had the following types of experiences: volunteer, service learning, paid work, and internship. Former students were required by the District of Columbia to complete 100 volunteer service hours in order to graduate from high school. Service learning was defined as a having completed a volunteer activity that included an academic project or component. The volunteer activity was defined as a community service activity that did not have an academic component. Paid work was defined as getting paid for a work experience while enrolled high school. Paid work for students included job opportunities obtained through or outside of the high school. Internship was defined as having a paid or unpaid work experience that happened over a short period of time. As a whole, former students participated in two or more activities: volunteer (94%, n=15), internship (69%, n=11), paid work (56%, n=9), and service learning (50%, n=8) (see Table 15). An important item to note is that former students did not always identify their C.I.T.Y. program experience as necessarily paid work experience or as an internship experience. C.I.T.Y. was a career exploration and internship program that took place during their junior year in high school. Students enrolled in a course entitled Integrated Career Skills, and C.I.T.Y. was a program within the course (see KTP, p. 195, on results).

Figure 8. Work or Training Experience at Kingsbury Center



The 2009 cohort (100%, n=4) had the opportunity to volunteer as part of their work or training experience in high school (see Table 16). In addition, they had service learning (75%, n=3), paid work (50%, n=2), and internship experiences (50%, n=2). The 2010 cohort (100%, n=3) reported that they had volunteer and internship experiences in high school (see Table 17). Former students shared that they had paid work (67%, n=2) and service learning (33%, n=1) as well. The majority of the 2011 cohort had volunteer (89%, n=8) and internship experiences (67%, n=6) (see Table 18). A smaller group of former students had paid work (56%, n=5) and service learning experiences (44%, n=4) in high school. As a whole, former students participated in one or more work or training experiences while in high school.

Table 15

Number of former students by work or training experience at Kingsbury Center, from 2009-2011

Work or Training Experience*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Internship	11	69%
Paid Work	9	56%
Service Learning	8	50%
Volunteer	15	94%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Table 16

Number of former students by work or training experience at Kingsbury Center, 2009 cohort

Work or Training Experience*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Internship	2	50%
Paid Work	2	50%
Service Learning	3	75%
Volunteer	4	100%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Table 17

Number of former students by work or training experience at Kingsbury Center, 2010 cohort

Work or Training Experience*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Internship	3	100%
Paid Work	2	67%
Service Learning	1	33%
Volunteer	3	100%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

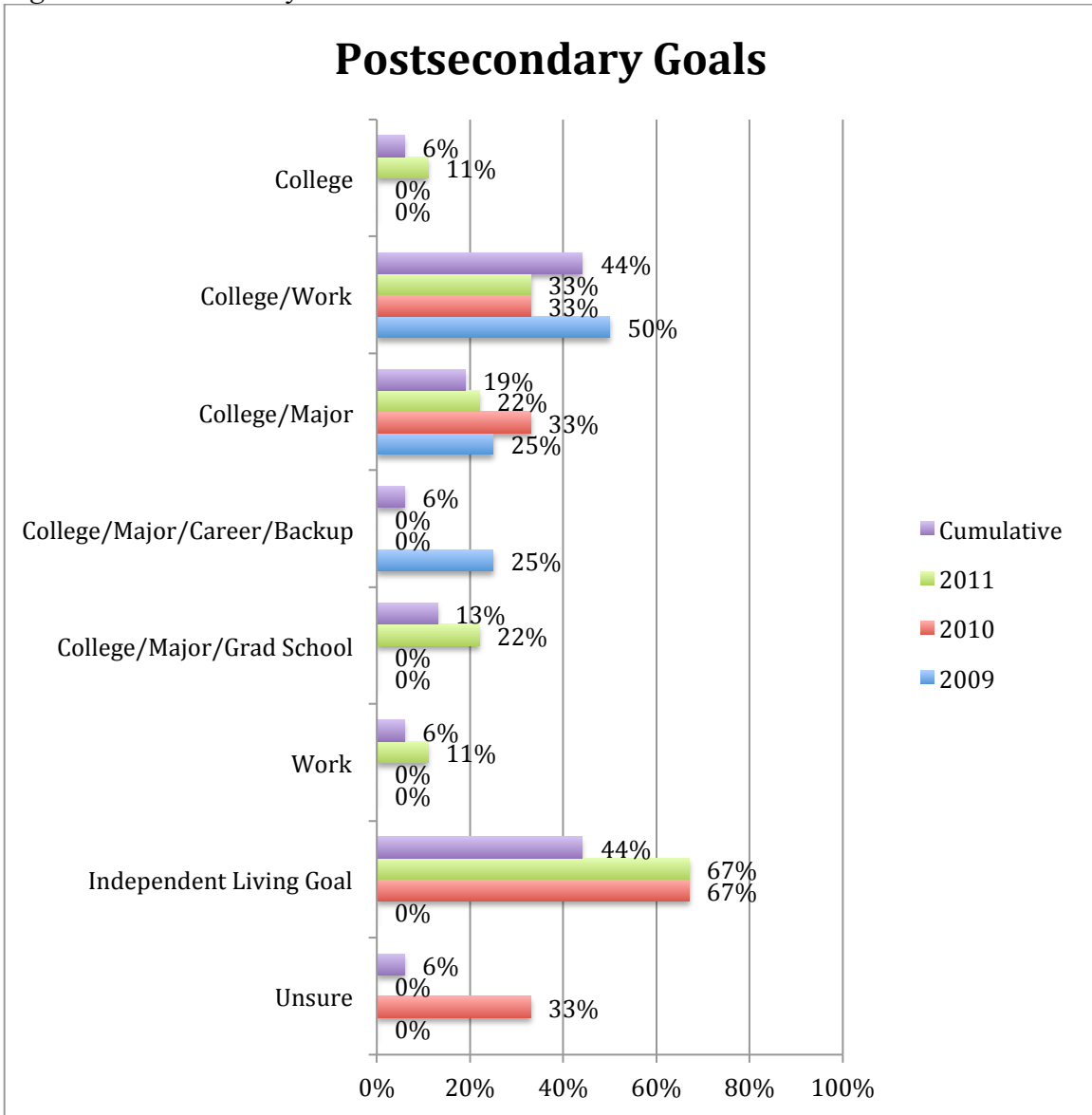
Table 18

Number of former students by work or training experience at Kingsbury Center, 2011 cohort

Work or Training Experience*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Internship	6	67%
Paid Work	5	56%
Service Learning	4	44%
Volunteer	8	89%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Figure 9. Postsecondary Goals Former Students Envisioned



Former students were requested to reflect on their postsecondary goals, including education, employment, and independent living (see Figure 9). The majority of former students (88%, n=14) had planned to enroll in college. The goals for college varied from student to student (e.g., from simply enroll to plans for graduate school). Former students had the following goals with regards to college: attend college to obtain employment (44%, n=6), attend college to pursue a specific major (19%, n=4), attend college to

pursue a specific major with expectations of graduate school (13%, n=2), attend college to pursue a specific major and career as well as have a back-up plan (6%, n=1), and attend college (6%, n=1) (see Table 19). The 2009 cohort reported attending college to obtain employment (50%, n=2), attend college with a specific major (25%, n=1), and attend college with specific major and career as well as have a back-up plan (25%, n=1) (see Table 20). The 2010 cohort had planned to attend college to obtain employment (33%, n=1) or attend college with a specific major (33%, n=1) (see Table 21). There was a former student (33%, n=1) who was unsure of his/her postsecondary goals. A couple of the former students (67%, n=2) from the 2010 cohort had an independent living goal. The 2011 cohort stated the following postsecondary education goals: attend college to obtain employment (33%, n=3), attend college with a specific major (22%, n=2), attend college with plans of graduate school (22%, n=2), or attend college (11%, n=1) (see Table 22). In addition, former students planned independent living (67%, n=6) and employment (11%, n=1) goals.

Table 19
Number of former students by postsecondary goal, from 2009-2011

Postsecondary Goals*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
College (Enrollment)	1	6%
College and Work	6	44%
College and Major	4	19%
College, Major, Career, & Backup Plan	1	6%
College, Major, & Grad School	2	13%
Work	1	6%
Independent Living Goals	8	44%
Unsure	1	6%
Total		
Postsecondary Education	14	88%
Employment	1	6%
Independent Living	8	44%

*Former students could have more than one postsecondary goal.

Table 20

Number of former students from the 2009 cohort by postsecondary goal

Postsecondary Goals*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
College and Work	2	50%
College and Major	1	25%
College, Major, Career, & Backup Plan	1	25%
Total		
Postsecondary Education	4	100%

*Former students could have more than one postsecondary goal.

Table 21

Number of former students from the 2010 cohort by postsecondary goal

Postsecondary Goals*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
College and Work	1	33%
College and Major	1	33%
Independent Living Goals	2	67%
Unsure	1	33%
Total		
Postsecondary Education	2	67%
Independent Living Goals	2	67%
Unsure	1	33%

*Former students could have more than one postsecondary goal.

Table 22

Number of former students from the 2011 cohort by postsecondary goal

Postsecondary Goals*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
College (Enrollment)	1	11%
College and Work	3	33%
College and Major	2	22%
College, Major, & Grad School	2	22%
Work	1	11%
Independent Living Goals	6	67%
Total		
Postsecondary Education	8	88%
Employment	1	11%
Independent Living Goals	6	67%
Unsure	1	11%

*Former students could have more than one postsecondary goal.

Former students went beyond sharing their postsecondary goals and added their own thoughts and comments about planning for the future. Darrow (2011) is an example of someone who was thinking ahead towards employment:

After graduating, my goals were to go to college, so I can better my life, so I can further my education, so in the future...so I can retire at an early age. My employment goals were to have steady job that I can utilize my education and further my education as far as learning how to grow with the company.

In addition, his priority was to find a position that he loved over a position that simply had a high income. A student, Malik (2011), had planned to go straight into the workforce to be a graphic designer. Another student, Jake (2010), was unsure of his postsecondary goals. He truly did not know what he had wanted to do after graduating high school. During his interview, Jake shared that he was unsure of what he had wanted to do after high school. He remembered that he felt that he was “drawing a blank” about his senior year and “never felt like I knew exactly what I was doing” and about what colleges to apply to. He felt that he did not receive the level of support from Kingsbury that he needed to assist in selecting a college. He felt removed from his friends who were more excited about the college application process. He decided on a local community college because “...I can better figure out what I’m interested in.” Former students (44%, n=8) had some type of independent living goal in determining where they planned to live after high school. Again, Darrow (2011) provides an example of thinking ahead to living independently:

While I was living with my mother, I would go to college, graduate from college, maintain a job so that I can buy a stable house instead of apartment. I did not want

to live with my mother for a long time period. I wanted to have my own so I could say that, “I live here,” and that I could bring proof to the table and not have to depend on anyone else but myself.

Overall, former students planned to attend college with the idea of transitioning into a career upon graduation. The goals for college varied from simply enrolling to plans for graduate school.

After reflecting on their postsecondary goals, former students were followed up with questions to determine if they were working towards and achieving the same goals as they had planned in high school. Most young adults (79%, n=14)² believed that they had achieved or were on the way to achieving their goals. Members of the 2009 cohort (75%, n=3) expressed that they had achieved or were on the way to achieving their goals. Adam (2009) shared that he is close to achieving his goals by finishing school with plans to graduate in May 2014. He highlighted how his goals had changed since high school, noting that he had:

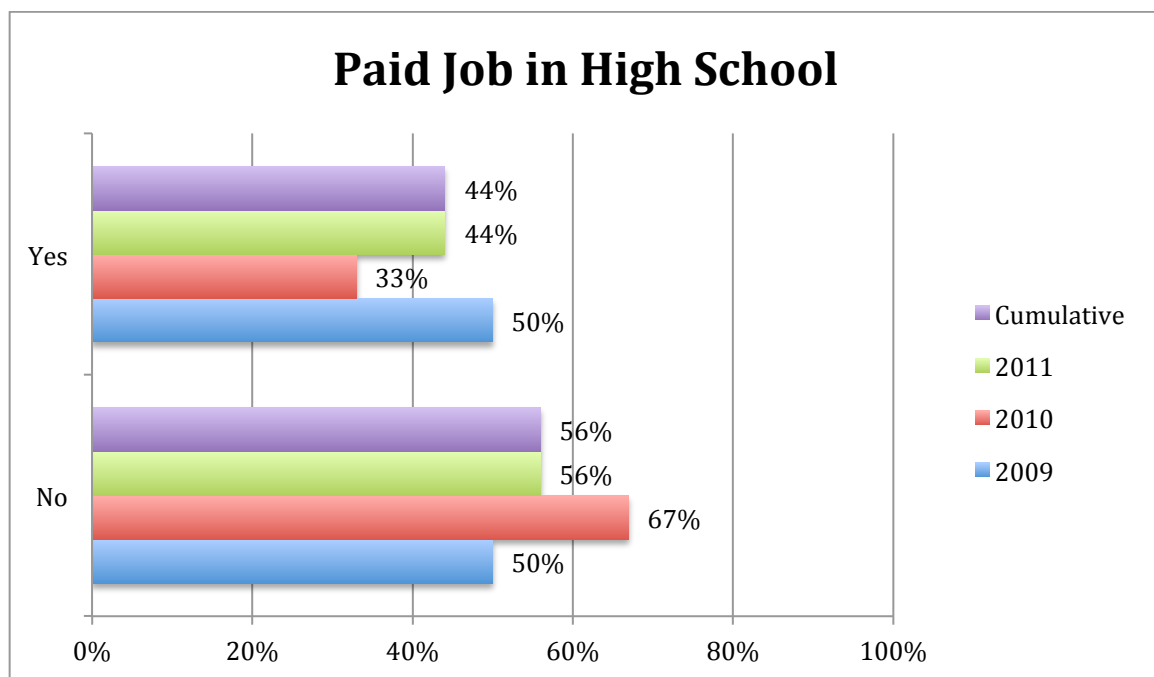
...more redirected them and made them more realistic. Because before I wasn't more realistic on the things that were around me, but now in this particular moment, I'm more cognizant on what's around me and what's more available to me. And basically, just taking advantage of networking.

The 2010 cohort (100%, n=2) reported having achieved or being on the way to achieving their goals. The 2011 cohort (75%, n=6), similar to previous cohorts, reported having achieved or being on the way to achieving their goals.

² Two students from 2010 and 2011 cohort were not asked whether they had achieved their goals.

Former students (87.5%, n=7) believed that they would be able to achieve their goals within a year or two. A former student (12.5%, n=1) believed that it would take longer to achieve their goals. The 2009 cohort (100%, n=2) anticipated that they would be able to achieve their postsecondary goals in one or two years. The 2010 cohort (100%, n=1) expected to achieve their postsecondary goals within a year or two. The 2011 cohort (80%, n=4) hoped to achieve their postsecondary goals in a year or two.

Figure 10. Paid Job while enrolled in High School



Former students were requested to share if they had a paying job while enrolled in high school (see Figure 10), and a little over half (56%, n=9) stated that they did not have a paying job in high school (see Table 23). The other former students (44%, n=7) said they had a paying job. Some students who participated in the C.I.T.Y. summer internship program did not consider it a paid work experience. The 2009 cohort was split between having a paid job (50%, n=2) and not working (50%, n=2) in high school (see Table 24). The majority of former students (67%, n=2) in the 2010 cohort did not have paying jobs

(see Table 25). A student (33%, n=1) in the 2010 cohort reported having a paying job in high school. The 2011 cohort (56%, n=5), similar to the 2010 cohort, reported not having a paid job while enrolled in high school (see Table 26). A small group of former students (44%, n=4) said they did have a job in high school.

Table 23

Number of former students who had a paid job in high school, from 2009-2011

Paid Job	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	7	44%
No	9	56%
Total	16	100%

Table 24

Number of former students who had a paid job in high school, from the 2009 cohort

Paid Job	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	50%
No	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 25

Number of former students who had a paid job in high school, from the 2010 cohort

Paid Job	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	33%
No	2	67%
Total	3	100%

Table 26

Number of former students who had a paid job in high school, from the 2011 cohort

Paid Job	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	44%
No	5	56%
Total	9	100%

Research Questions (RQ) 1, Pt. 1: What are the post-school outcomes in the area of postsecondary education of young adults with LD who completed and participated in the KTP at a private secondary school for students with LD?

Postsecondary Education

Enrollment History (e.g., school, training, or education)

Former Kingsbury students (94%, n=15) have been enrolled in some type of school, training, or education program since graduating or exiting from high school (see Figure 11 and Table 27). There was only one former student (6%, n=1), Freddy³ (2009), who never enrolled in any type of postsecondary school or program. Freddy did not graduate from Kingsbury, but he did participate in the transition courses at Kingsbury. It is not known if he finished at another school or obtained his GED. He stated that attending a postsecondary program did not fit his situation at that point in time. However, he was included in the follow-up study because his observations were important enough to warrant inclusion.

Former students enrolled at four-year institutions (44%, n=7), two-year institutions (38%, n=5), and as transfer students from two-year to four-year institutions (19%, n=3) (see Figure 12 and Table 31). Since high school, participants from the 2009 cohort enrolled at two-year (25%, n=1) and four-year (50%, n=2) institutions (see Table 32). The 2010 cohort had a portion of former students who transferred from two-year to four-year institutions (67%, n=2) as well as enrolled in four-year institutions (33%, n=1) (see Table 33). The 2011 cohort had former students enrolled at two-year (44%, n=4) and four-year (44%, n=4) institutions (see Table 34). A former student (11%, n=1) enrolled at a two-year school and then transferred to a four-year institution.

³ Freddy was included in the sample because his story is important.

Approximately 75% (n=12) of the former students were currently enrolled in some type of postsecondary education program at the time of the study (see Table 27). However, a few former students (25%, n=4) were not currently enrolled in any type of postsecondary education program. At the time of the interview, there was only one college graduate. Muslin (2009) (6%, n=1) had completed a four-year degree program (see Table 28). The majority of former students (94%, n=15) who had enrolled have not completed a two-year or four-year degree program. Former students provided a few reasons (i.e., students could have more than one reason) as to why they had not completed their degree program: still working towards degree (69%), other reasons (25%), and financial strain (19%). Although working towards their degrees at a two-year community colleges, some students shared “other reasons” as to why they had not completed their degree. Ryan (2009) shared that due to the type of classes he was taking “...it’s hard to keep up.” Rachel (2011) was overwhelmed with the number of courses to be taken at one time. John (2011) elected to take fewer courses at one time. Darrow (2011) recognized that the college pathway was an individualized experience and concluded that it would take him longer than two years to obtain his associates degree. Alicia (2011), who had attended a four-year university, was diagnosed with agoraphobia in college. She shared that this diagnosis, “...hindered the process” of attending and learning in her classes. She has received therapy and is currently focused on her employment goals.

Figure 11. Enrollment history of former students with learning disabilities highlighting enrollment history, current enrollment, and degree completion.

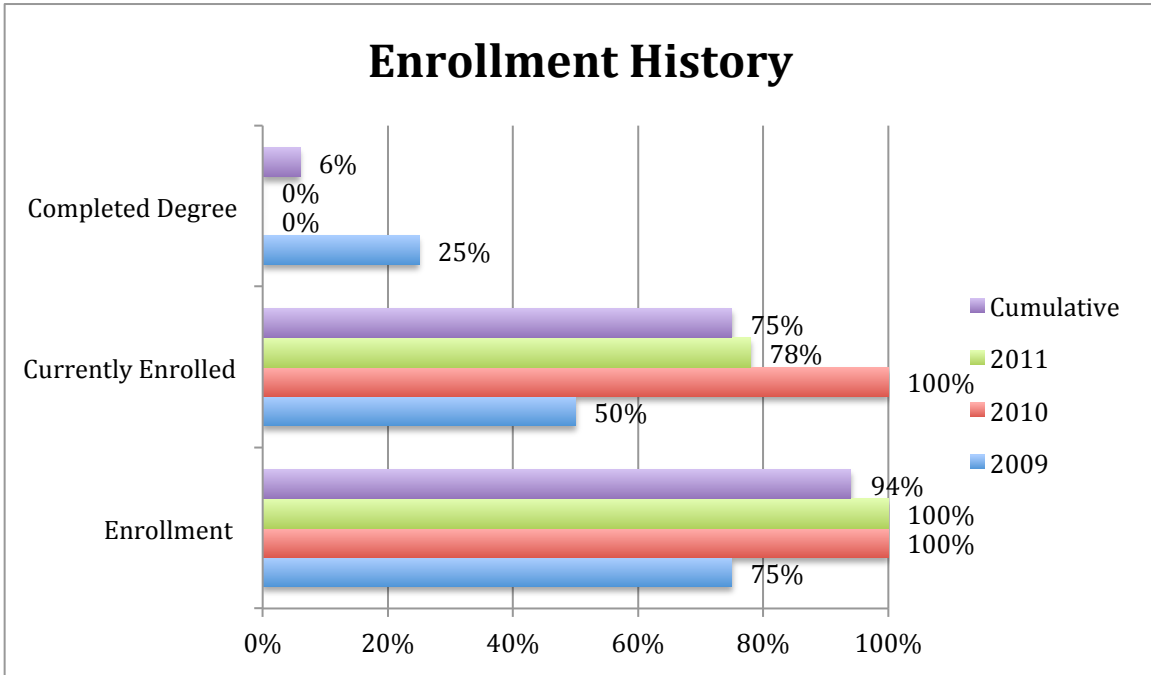


Table 27

Number of former students who had enrolled, are currently enrolled, or have completed a degree, from 2009-2011 cohorts

Enrollment History	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Completed Degree	1	6%
Currently Enrolled	12	75%
Enrollment*	15	94%

*Enrollment means being enrolled in higher education at any time since high school. Students did not have to complete one term to be considered enrolled in an institution of higher education.

Table 28

Number of former students who had enrolled, are currently enrolled, or have completed a degree, from the 2009 cohort

Enrollment History	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Completed Degree	1	6%
Currently Enrolled	2	50%
Enrollment	3	75%

Table 29

Number of former students who had enrolled, are currently enrolled, or have completed a degree, from the 2010 cohort

Enrollment History	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Completed Degree	0	0%
Currently Enrolled	3	100%
Enrollment	3	100%

Table 30

Number of former students who had enrolled, are currently enrolled, or have completed a degree, from the 2011 cohort

Enrollment History	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Completed Degree	0	0%
Currently Enrolled	7	78%
Enrolled	9	100%

Figure 12. Type of school or training program attended

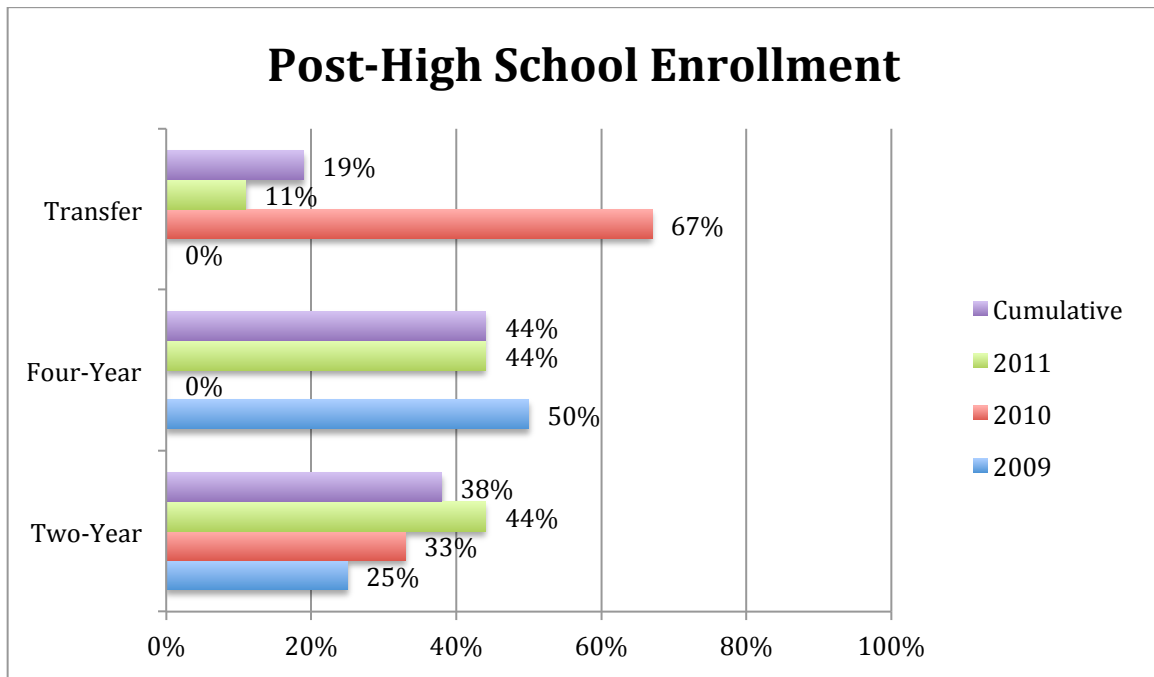


Table 31

Type of school or training program students from 2009-2011 cohorts attended

Post-High School Enrollment	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Transfer	3	18.75%
Four-year	7	43.75%
Two-year	5	37.5%
Total	15	100%

Table 32

Type of school or training program students from the 2009 cohort attended

Post-High School Enrollment	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Transfer	0	0%
Four-year	2	50%
Two-year	1	25%
Total	3	75%

Table 33

Type of school or training program students from the 2010 cohort attended

Post-High School Enrollment	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Transfer	2	67%
Four-year	1	33%
Two-year	0	0%
Total	3	100%

Table 34

Type of school or training program students from the 2011 cohort attended

Post-High School Enrollment	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Transfer	1	11.11%
Four-year	4	44.44%
Two-year	4	44.44%
Total	9	100%

Currently Enrolled

Former students are currently enrolled at two-year (25%, n=4) and four-year (50%, n=8) institutions (see Figure 13 and Table 35). In the 2009 cohort, former students are separately enrolled in two-year (25%, n=1) and four-year (25%, n=1) institutions (see Table 36). The 2010 cohort (100%, n=3) is enrolled in four-year colleges or universities (see Table 37). The 2011 cohort has a mix of former students enrolled in two-year (33%, n=3) and four-year (44%, n=4) institutions (see Table 38). The former students are attending college part-time (31%, n=5) and full-time (44%, n=7) (see Table 39). Members of the 2009 cohort are enrolled in college part-time (25%, n=1) and full-time (25%, n=1) (see Table 40). Students in the 2010 cohort are attending four-year institutions part-time (33%, n=1) and full-time (67%, n=2) (see Table 41). The 2011 cohort reveals that students are enrolled part-time (33%, n=3) and full-time (44%, n=4) (see Table 42).

Collectively, former students (50%, n=8) have been enrolled in more than four semesters and are working towards their degrees (see Table 43). A smaller number of former students have been enrolled for four semesters (13%, n=2), three semesters (6%, n=1), and no or zero semesters (6%, n=1). Those in the 2009 cohort (50%, n=2) have been enrolled in more than four semesters (see Table 44). Those in the 2010 cohort have been enrolled for more than four semesters (67%, n=2) and four semesters (33%, n=1) (see Table 45). The 2011 cohort had several students (44%, n=4) enrolled for more than four semesters. There was a student enrolled in each of the following categories: four semesters (11%, n=1), three semesters (11%, n=1), and zero semesters (11%, n=1) (See Table 46).

Former students are currently majoring in the following areas of study: Communications (33%), Graphic Design (17%), English Communications (8%), Computer Technology (8%), Computer Engineering (8%), Health & Fitness (8%), General Studies (8%), and Undecided (8%). Students are currently working towards their Associates (25%, n=4) or Bachelor's (50%, n=8) degrees (see Figure 14 and Table 47). The 2009 cohort has former students working towards Bachelor's (25%, n=1) and Associates (25%, n=1) degrees (see Table 48). The 2010 cohort (100%, n=3) is on the path to obtain their Bachelor's degree (see Table 49). The 2011 cohort has slightly more former students working towards Bachelor's (44%, n=4) than Associates' degrees (33%, n=3) degrees (see Table 50). All former students (100%, n=12⁴) who are currently enrolled in an institution of higher education anticipate receiving their degree. The majority of former students indicated they anticipated in receiving their degree in 2014 (33%, n=4) or 2015 (50%, n=6). A couple of the former students fell outside those anticipated graduation dates. Jake (2010) plans to obtain his degree in 2016. Ryan (2009) was unsure as to when he would obtain his degree.

⁴ Total number of respondents currently enrolled in a higher education institution from the 2009, 2010, and 2011 cohorts.

Figure 13. Postsecondary education institutions students are currently attending

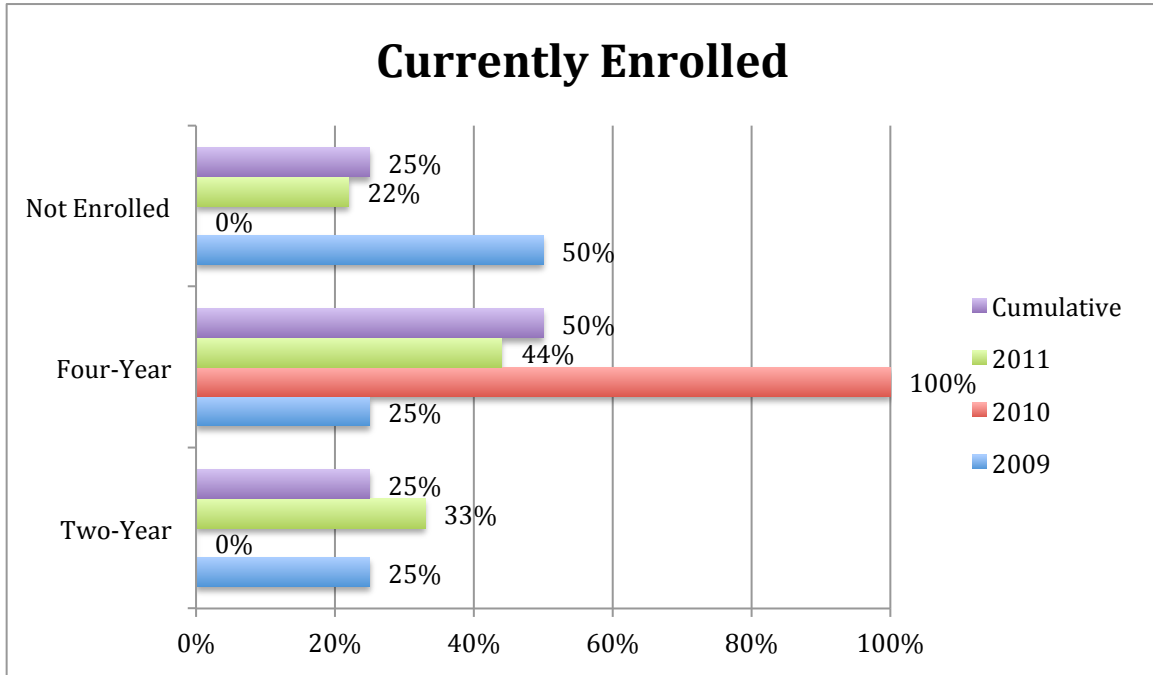


Table 35
Number of students currently enrolled, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Currently Enrolled	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	4	25%
Four-Year	8	50%
Two-Year	4	25%
Total	16	100%

Table 36
Number of students currently enrolled, from the 2009 cohort

Currently Enrolled	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	50%
Four-Year	1	25%
Two-year	1	25%
Total	4	100%

Table 37

Number of students currently enrolled, from the 2010 cohort

Currently Enrolled	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	0	0%
Four-Year	3	100%
Two-Year	0	0%
Total	3	100%

Table 38

Number of students currently enrolled, from the 2011 cohort

Currently Enrolled	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	22.22%
Four-Year	4	44.44%
Two-Year	3	33.33%
Total	9	99.99%

Table 39

Number of students currently enrolled part- or full-time, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Student Status	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	4	25%
Full-Time	7	44%
Part-Time	5	31%
Total	16	100%

Table 40

Number of students currently enrolled part- or full-time, from the 2009 cohort

Student Status	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	50%
Full-Time	1	25%
Part-Time	1	25%
Total	4	100%

Table 41

Number of students currently enrolled part- or full-time, from the 2010 cohort

Student Status	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	0	0
Full-Time	2	67%
Part-Time	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Table 42

Number of students currently enrolled part- or full-time, from the 2011 cohort

Student Status	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	22.22%
Full-Time	4	44.44%
Part-Time	3	33.33%
Total	9	100%

Table 43

Number of students currently enrolled by number of semesters attended, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Number of Semesters	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	4	25%
More than 4 Semesters	8	50%
Four Semesters	2	13%
Three Semesters	1	6%
Zero Semesters	1	6%
Total	16	100%

Table 44

Number of students currently enrolled by numbers of semesters attended, from the 2009 cohort

Number of Semesters	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	50%
More than 4 Semesters	2	50%
Four Semesters	0	0%
Three Semesters	0	0%
Zero Semesters	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table 45

Number of students currently enrolled by number of semesters attended, from the 2010 cohort

Number of Semesters	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	0	0%
More than 4 Semesters	2	67%
Four Semesters	1	33%
Three Semesters	0	0%
Zero Semesters	0	0%
Total	3	100%

Table 46

Number of students currently enrolled by number of semesters attended, from the 2011 cohort

Number of Semesters	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	22.22%
More than 4 Semesters	4	44.44%
Four Semesters	1	11.11%
Three Semesters	1	11.11%
Zero Semesters	1	11.11%
Total	9	100%

Figure 14. Type of higher education degree the students are working towards

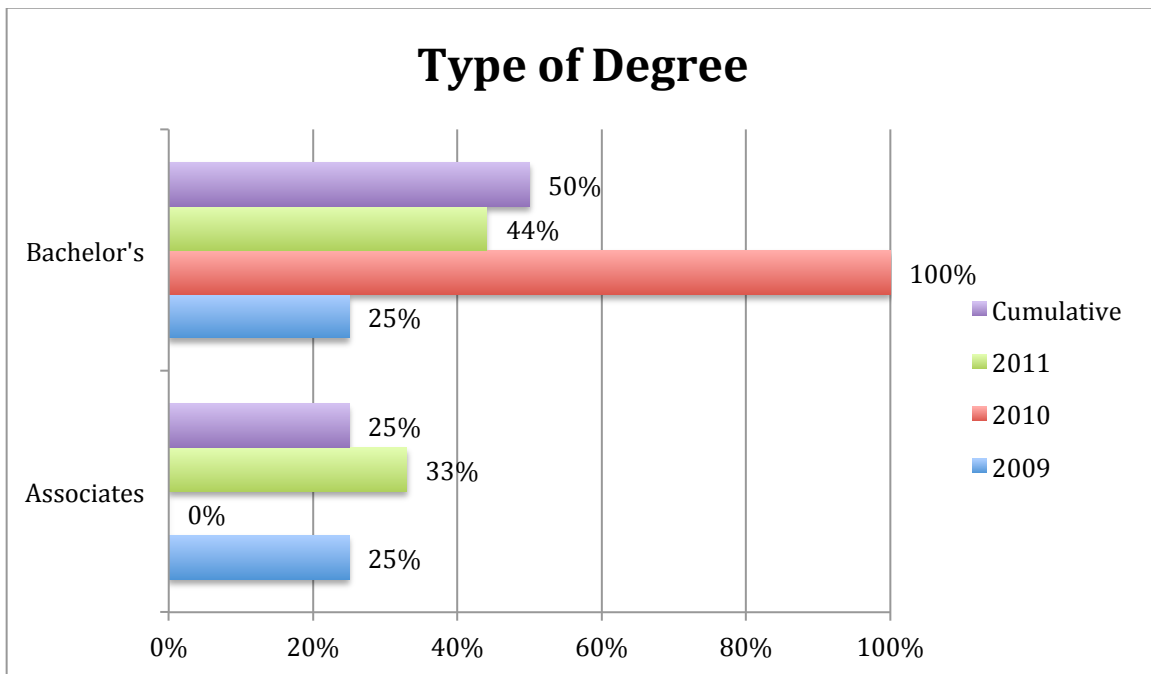


Table 47

Number of students by type of degree sought, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Type of Degree	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	4	25%
Bachelor's	8	50%
Associates	4	25%
Total	16	100%

Table 48
Number of students by type of degree sought, from the 2009 cohort

Type of Degree	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	50%
Bachelor's	1	25%
Associates	1	25%
Total	2	100%

Table 49
Number of students by type of degree sought, from the 2010 cohort

Type of Degree	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	0	0%
Bachelor's	3	100%
Associates	0	0%
Total	3	100%

Table 50
Number of students by type of degree sought, from the 2011 cohort

Type of Degree	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Not Enrolled	2	22.22%
Bachelor's	4	44.44%
Associates	3	33.33%
Total	9	100%

College students with disabilities can register with the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) to receive support services and accommodations on campus. Students have to be eligible to receive them by disclosing their disability. Most former students (75%, n=9) who are attending an institution of higher education have requested some type of support services/accommodations from DSS or from the Counseling Center. A small group of former students (25%, n=3) decided not to request services or accommodations. They knew how to request services but decided that they did not need them (17%, n=2) or simply have not submitted a request (8%, n=1). All former students who requested services received support services/accommodations at their respective college or university. There was one former student who only used the counseling

services. Former students used the following services on campus: tutoring (78%, n=7), writing/math center (67%, n=6), notetaker (55%, n=5), and other (22%, n=2) (e.g., Program for the Advancement of Learning (PAL), Learning Specialist) (See Figure 15 and Table 51). Most of the former students have requested one or more of the following different types of accommodations for the classroom environment (see Figure 16). All the former students (100%, n=9) required and needed extra time on tests and assignments (see Table 55). The use of assistive technology (67%, n=6) is another highly requested accommodation in college (see Table 55). A smaller number of former students recorded lectures (33%, n=3) or used audiobooks (22%, n=2) (see Table 55).

Figure 15. Type of services that former students are utilizing on campus

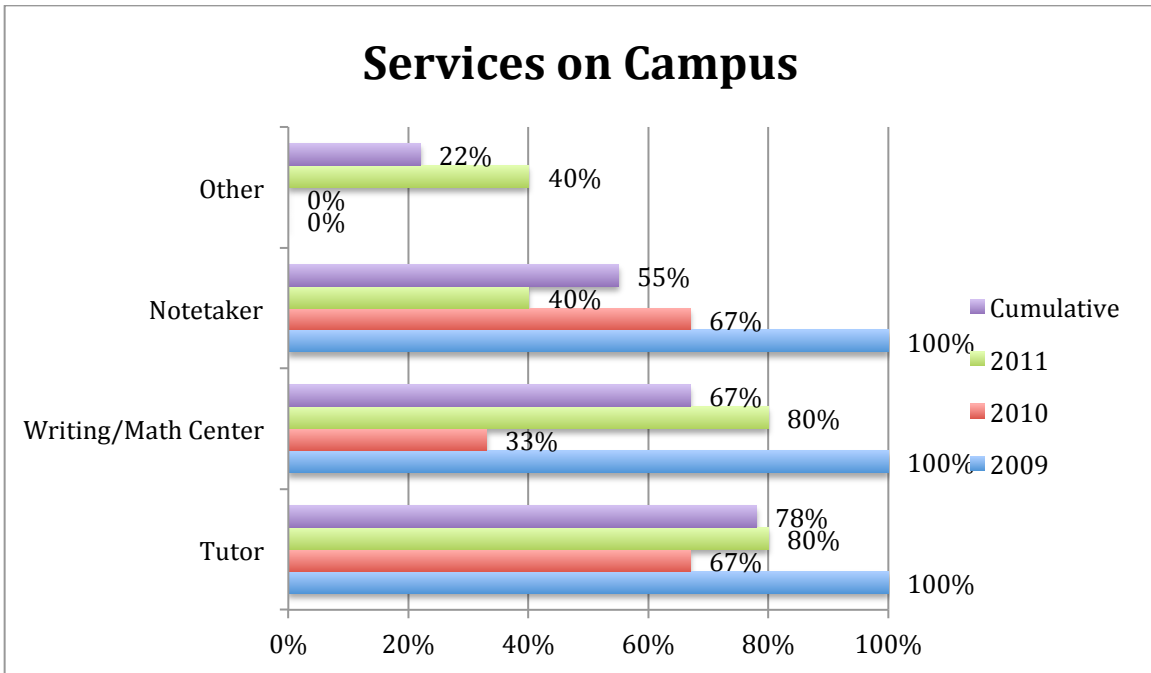


Table 51

Number of students on the types of services received on campus, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Services on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Other	2	22%
Notetaker	5	55%
Writing/Math Center	6	67%
Tutor	7	78%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 52

Number of students on the types of services received on campus, from the 2009 cohort

Services on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Other	0	0%
Notetaker	1	100%
Writing/Math Center	1	100%
Tutor	1	100%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 53

Number of students on the types of services received on campus, from the 2010 cohort

Services on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Other	0	0%
Notetaker	2	67%
Writing/Math Center	1	33%
Tutor	2	67%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 54

Number of students on the types of services received on campus, from the 2011 cohort

Services on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Other	2	40%
Notetaker	2	40%
Writing/Math Center	4	80%
Tutor	4	80%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Figure 16. Type of accommodations students are using in their classes

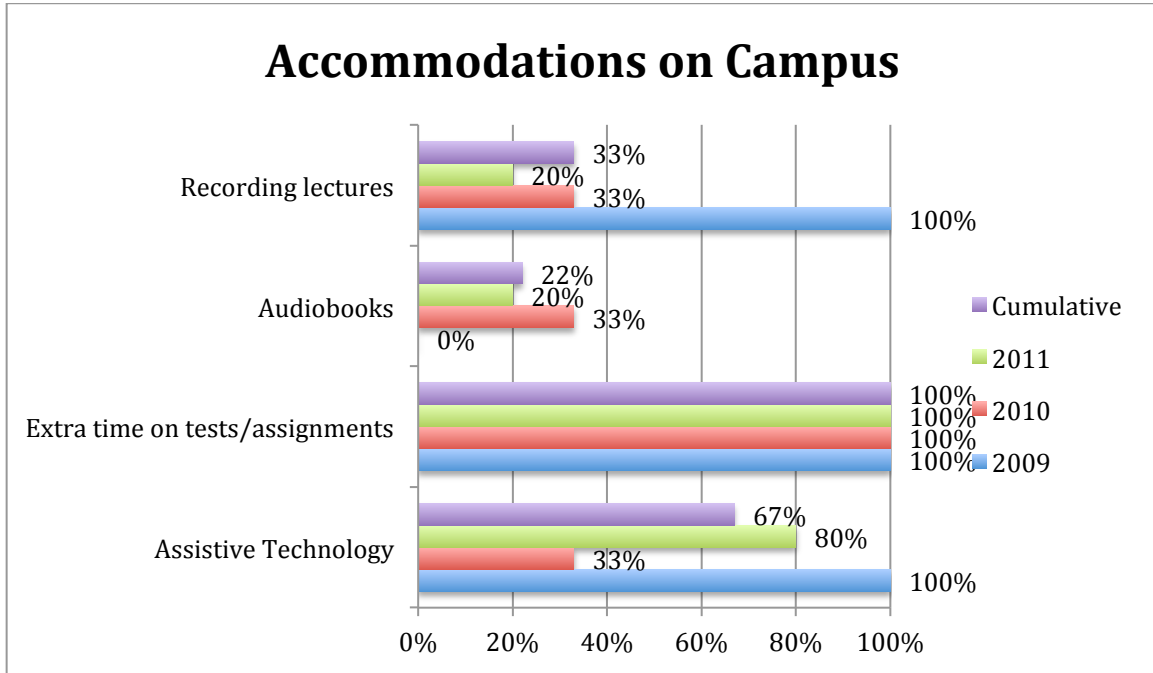


Table 55

Number of students on the types of accommodations used on campus, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Accommodations on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Recording Lectures	3	33%
Audiobooks	2	22%
Extra Time on Tests/Assignments	9	100%
Assistive Technology	6	67%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 56

Number of students on the types of accommodations used on campus, from the 2009 cohort

Accommodations on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Recording Lectures	1	100%
Audiobooks	0	0%
Extra Time on Tests/Assignments	1	100%
Assistive Technology	1	100%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 57

Number of students on the types of accommodations used on campus, from the 2010 cohort

Accommodations on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Recording Lectures	1	33%
Audiobooks	1	33%
Extra Time on Tests/Assignments	3	100%
Assistive Technology	1	33%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 58

Number of students on the types of accommodations used on campus, from the 2011 cohort

Accommodations on Campus*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Recording Lectures	1	20%
Audiobooks	1	20%
Extra Time on Tests/Assignments	5	100%
Assistive Technology	4	80%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Completed a Degree

Muslin (2009) was the only former student interviewed who had recently graduated from college. She attended and graduated from a four-year institution with a Bachelor of Arts degree. As a student, she requested and received support services and accommodations from her college's DSS office. She utilized the following services while at college: tutoring, writing and math center, and notetaker. She requested accommodations to receive extra time on tests or assignments. In addition, she used a computer to take notes in class.

Summary

Overall, former students (94%, n=15) enrolled in some type of postsecondary institution since leaving high school. Seventy-five percent (n=12) of the students are currently enrolled at two- and four-year institutions. Darrow (2011) recognized that it was an individualized process to complete his health fitness degree:

Still working to complete the training program or degree—I realize that I still need the time with my experience. Yes, it is a two-year college but it depends on the individual and, for me, I realize it's going to take me a little bit more than two years to get my Associate's degree.

Former students are currently working towards their Associate's (25%, n=4) or Bachelor's degree (50%, n=8). Former students (75%, n=9) have requested services and accommodations on campus. The accommodations requested were extra time on tests and assignments (100%, n=9) as well as the use of assistive technology (67%, n=6). In addition, former students have used the following services: tutoring (78%, n=7), writing/math center (67%, n=6), and notetaker services (55%, n=5). Former students anticipate graduating with their degree in 2014 (33%, n=4) or 2015 (50%, n=6). There was only one former student who had completed a degree and one who did not enroll in a postsecondary institution.

RQ 1, Pt. 2: What are the post-school outcomes in the area of employment of young adults with LD that completed and participated in the KTP at a private secondary school for students with LD?

Employment

Employment History

The majority of the students surveyed (94%, n=15) have held a job since leaving or graduating from high school (see Figure 17 and Table 59). There was only one former student (6%, n=1) who had not held a job since high school. In the 2009 cohort, half of them (50%, n=2) have been employed; one former student (25%, n=1) worked only as a volunteer and one (25%, n=1) had never worked in any type of employment setting since leaving high school (Table 60). All students (100%, n=12⁵) in the 2010 and 2011 graduating classes held some type of job after high school (see Table 61 and 62). Overall, the majority (73%, n=11) of those surveyed have held two to four jobs since high school (see Figure 18 and Table 63). A small percentage of former students (20%, n=3) have held five to nine jobs (see Table 63). There was only one former student (7%, n=1) who held only one job since leaving high school. Four-fifths of the former students (80%, n=12) reported that they have worked in at least one job for at least three months. A small cluster of former students (20%, n=3) shared that they had not worked at one job for at least three months.

Currently Employed

A slight majority of former students (56%, n=9) are currently employed and working in some type of employment setting (see Figure 19 and Table 67). A small group of former students (44%, n=7) were not employed at the time of the interview (see Table

⁵ Total respondents from 2010 and 2011 cohorts.

67). Those employed shared typical hours that they worked each week: 1-20 hours (56%, n=5), 21-35 hours (11%, n=1), and 36-40 hours (33%, n=3) (see Figure 20 and Table 71). The average hourly wage received by the employees is \$11.05. Former students typically held an entry-level position (78%, n=7) with a few students working in some type of semi-skilled position (22%, n=2). Participants were placed in a variety of job settings: company, business, or service (44%, n=4); other (44%, n=4); and family business (11%, n=1). Students who selected “other” were placed in such positions as a higher education institution, employment program for individuals with disabilities (e.g., project search), and local government. Most students (66%, n=6) have had their current job for less than six months. A few former students have had their current jobs for six to 12 months (22%, n=2⁶) and over a year (22%, n=2).

The students found their current jobs by talking with family and friends (33%, n=3), checking job search engine sites (22%, n=2), working with an agency that supports people with disabilities (22%, n=2), or through other avenues (22%, n=2). The 2009 cohort (100%, n=2) found their current positions by talking with family and friends. The 2010 cohort, a former student (100%, n=1), found a job by using Career Services at the university. Those in the 2011 cohort found jobs by checking the job engine websites (34%, n=2), working with an agency that support students with disabilities (34%, n=2), talking with friends and family (17%, n=1), and through other avenues (17%, n=1). A couple of former students (34%, n=2) found support through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and Bridges program. Another former student (17%, n=1) discovered his/her current job opportunity by walking the neighbor’s dog.

⁶ A former student worked two jobs simultaneously—one for six to 12 months and the other for less than six months.

Figure 17. Former students report if they have worked since high school

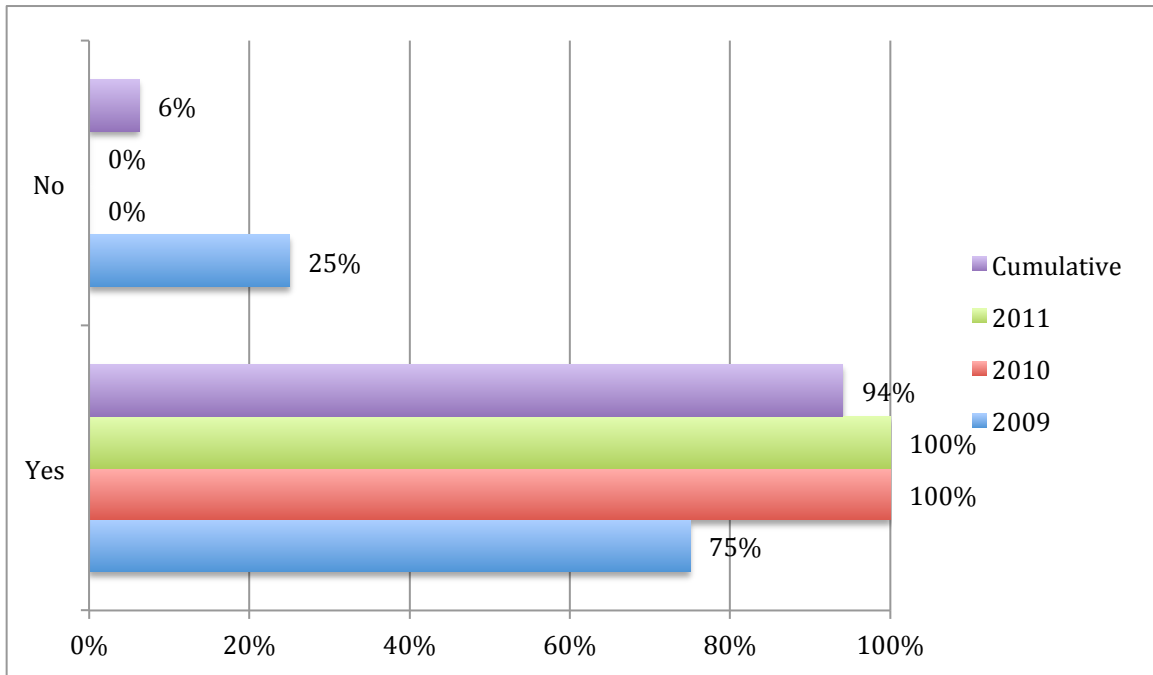


Table 59

Number of students reporting that they have worked since high school, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Employment After High School	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	1	6%
Yes	15	94%
Total	16	100%

Table 60

Number of students reporting that they have worked since high school, from the 2009 cohort

Employment After High School	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	1	25%
Yes	3	75%
Total	4	100%

Table 61

Number of students reporting that they have worked since high school, from the 2010 cohort

Employment After High School	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	0	0%
Yes	3	100%
Total	3	100%

Table 62

Number of students reporting that they have worked since high school, from the 2011 cohort

Employment After High School	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	0	0%
Yes	9	100%
Total	9	100%

Figure 18. Former students report how many jobs they have had since high school

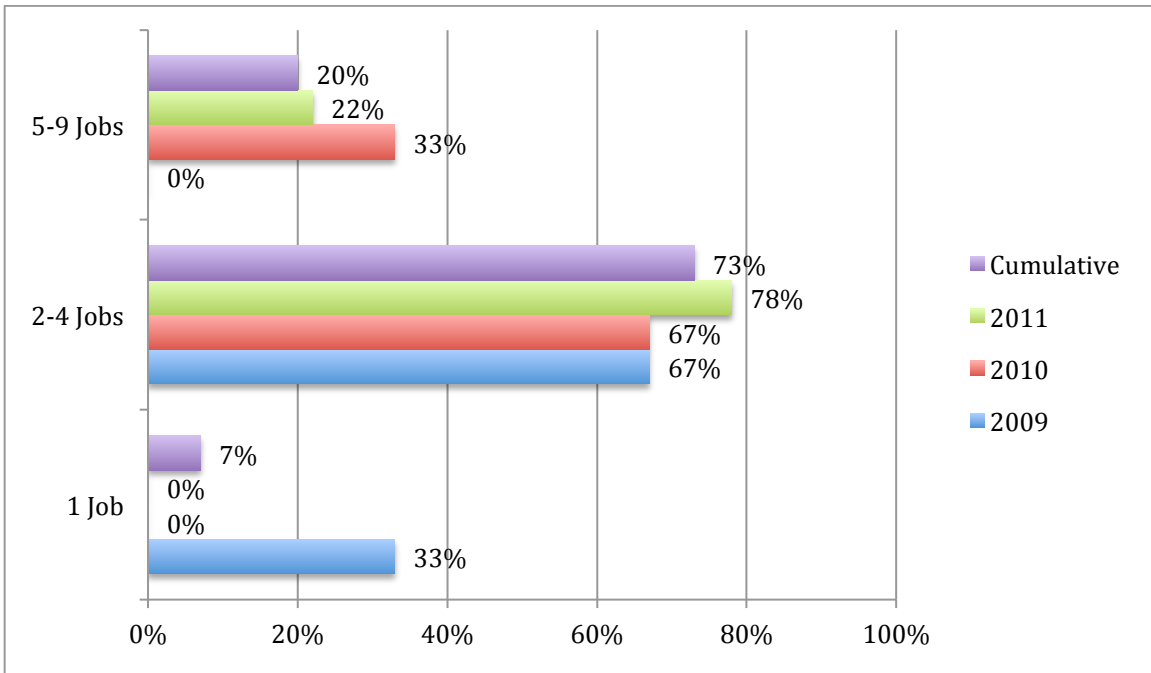


Table 63

Number of jobs students have had since high school, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Number of Jobs	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
5-9 Jobs	3	20%
2-4 Jobs	11	73%
1 Job	1	7%
Total	15	100%

Table 64

Number of jobs students have had since high school, from the 2009 cohort

Number of Jobs	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
5-9 Jobs	0	0%
2-4 Jobs	2	67%
1 Jobs	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Table 65

Number of jobs students have had since high school, from the 2010 cohort

Number of Jobs	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
5-9 Jobs	1	33%
2-4 Jobs	2	67%
1 Jobs	0	0%
Total	3	100%

Table 66

Number of jobs students have had since high school, from the 2011 cohort

Number of Jobs	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
5-9 Jobs	2	22%
2-4 Jobs	7	78%
1 Jobs	0	0%
Total	9	100%

Figure 19. Former students currently employed

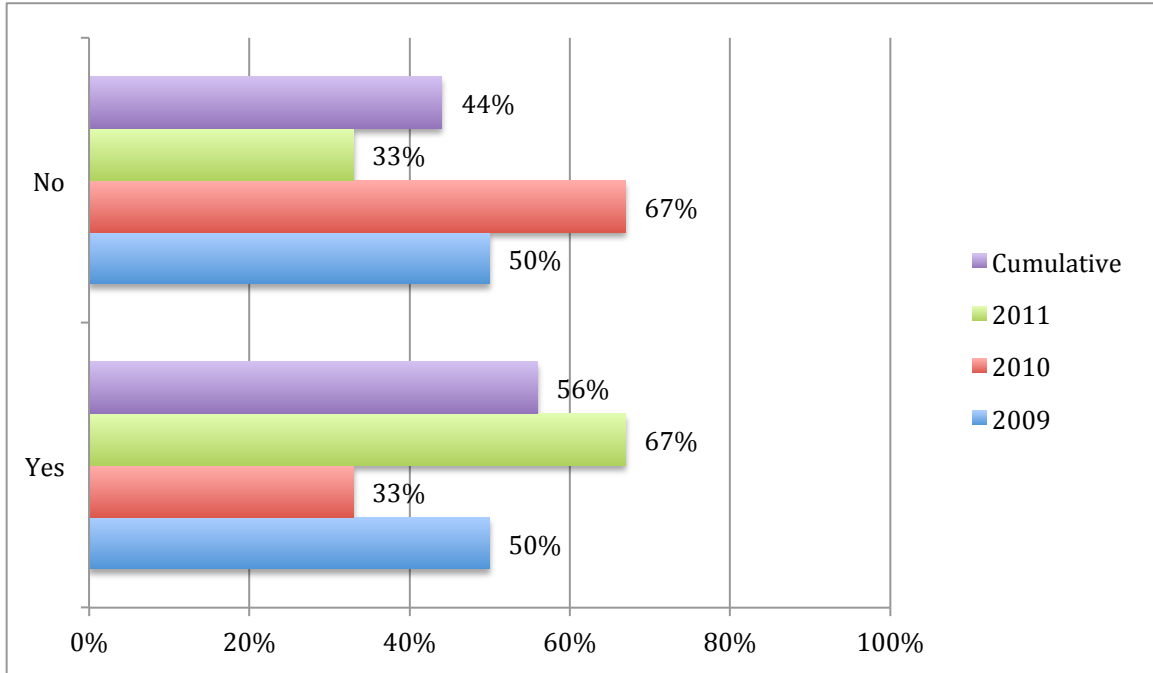


Table 67

Number of students currently employed, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Currently Employed	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	7	44%
Yes	9	56%
Total	16	100%

Table 68

Number of students currently employed, from the 2009 cohort

Currently Employed	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	2	50%
Yes	2	50%
Total	3	100%

Table 69

Number of students currently employed, from the 2010 cohort

Currently Employed	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	2	67%
Yes	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Table 70

Number of students currently employed, from the 2011 cohort

Currently Employed	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No	3	33%
Yes	6	67%
Total	9	100%

Figure 20. Hours per week worked by currently employed former students

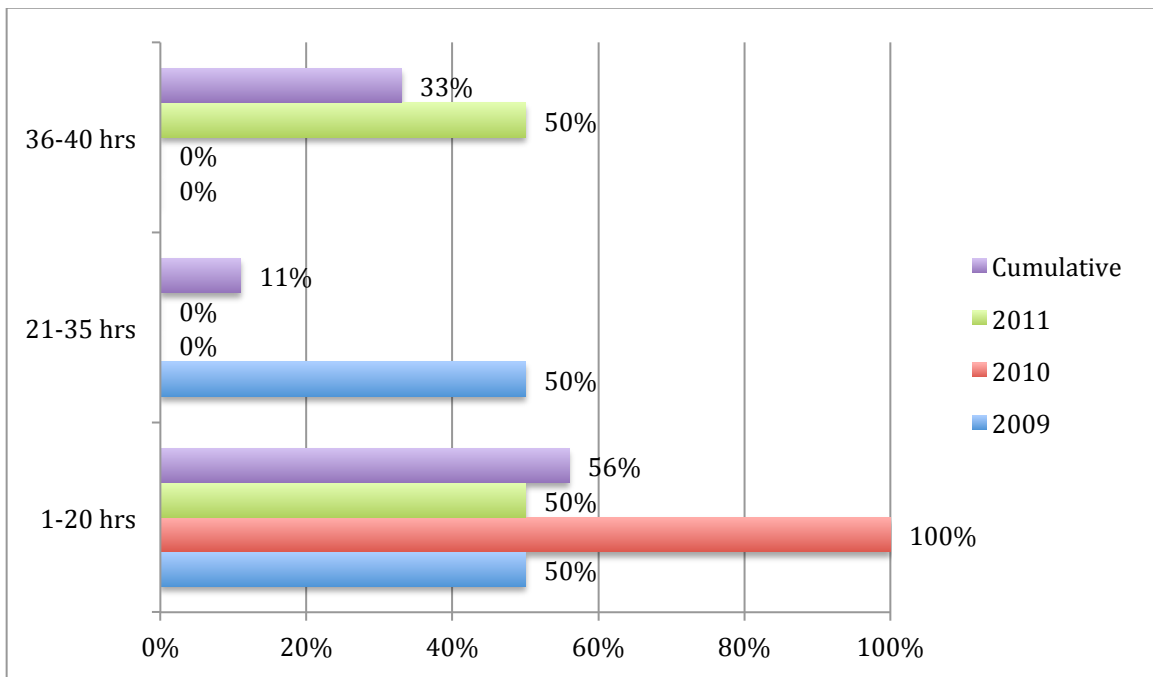


Table 71

Number of hours worked per week by currently employed students, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Number of Hours	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
36-40 hours	3	33%
21-35 hours	1	11%
1-20 hours	5	56%
Total	9	100%

Table 72

Number of hours worked per week by currently employed students, from the 2009 cohort

Number of Hours	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
36-40 hours	0	0
21-35 hours	1	50%
1-20 hours	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 73

Number of hours worked per week by currently employed students, from the 2010 cohort

Number of Hours	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
36-40 hours	0	0
21-35 hours	0	0
1-20 hours	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Table 74

Number of hours worked per week by currently employed students, from the 2011 cohort

Number of Hours	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
36-40 hours	3	50%
21-35 hours	0	0
1-20 hours	3	50%
Total	6	100%

Former students were requested to share if they received any benefits in their current position. The job benefits included vacation, health insurance, sick days/leave, and/or retirement. Several former students (44%, n=4) reported not receiving any type of benefit in their current position. However, a few shared that they received vacation time (33%, n=3), health insurance (33%, n=3), sick days/leave (33%, n=3), and retirement benefits (22%, n=2). One former student (11%, n=1) stated that she did not even know if she received benefits. The 2009 cohort received vacation time (100%, n=2) and health insurance benefits (100%, n=2) as well as sick days (50%, n=1) and retirement benefits (50%, n=1). The 2010 cohort consisted of one student who received no benefits. The

2011 cohort received sick days/leave (34%, n=2), vacation time (17%, n=1), health insurance (17%, n=1), and pension/retirement benefits (17%, n=1). Half of the 2011 cohort (51%, n=3) received no benefits, and one (11%, n=1) of former student was unaware of any type of benefits offered in their work place.

Former students were questioned about whether they requested and received accommodations in their current workplace environment. The majority (88%, n=8) did not request accommodations in the workplace. Former students were asked why they did not to request accommodations. The majority of former students stated that they could fully complete and meet job requirements without accommodations. Michael (2010) said that, "...if I do have a problem I just ask someone." Another student, Sue (2011), was trained to complete tasks and shadowed someone. She was able to meet job requirements without accommodations. There were a couple of students who did not need to request the accommodations. In addition, there were several students who were confused about the disclosure process and their rights in the workplace. Darrow (2011) did not appear to understand the disclosure process. He was under the impression that the employer had to approach him about accommodations. Malik (2011) thought accommodations only applied to school settings. A former student (11%, n=1) did request accommodations on the job. These few students who requested accommodations did not know if they had received or currently were receiving the accommodations and/or did not know the type of accommodations that could be obtained in the workplace.

Previously Employed

Former students who are not currently working but who had been previously employed disclosed information about their most recent job. There were a total of six

former students (38%, n=6) who met this criterion. The majority of previously employed former students (83%, n=5) have been unemployed for less than six months. A former student (17%, n=1) has been unemployed for more than a year. Former students were requested to share information about their previous employment experience. Former students worked the spectrum of part- to full-time hours. Over half of the former students (66.68%, n=4) who were previously employed often worked between 21-35 hours a week. One student (16.67%, n=1) worked full-time (36-40 hrs.). Another student (16.67%, n=1) worked less than 20 hours a week. Former students, on average, received \$8.30 an hour. There was one former student who was not paid due to working as a volunteer. Former students were evenly split in describing their previous job as an entry-level position (50%, n=3) or a semi-skilled (50%, n=3) position that required training or experience for about a year. Former students were employed in a variety of settings: other (66.68%, n=4) (e.g., federal government, organization, or higher education institution) or in a company/business (33.34%, n=2). In their previous job, some students received some benefits, including vacation time (50%, n=3), sick days (50%, n=3), health insurance (17%, n=1), and retirement benefits (17%, n=1). Half of the former students (50%, n=3) stated that they received no type of benefits in their last job.

Former students found their job by talking with family and friends (50%, n=3), working with an employment agency or service (34%, n=2), or through their high school experience (17%, n=1). Overwhelmingly, 83% (n=5) of the students who previously worked are not trying to find another job. One student (17%, n=1) is seeking to find another job. Students left their job because it was a temporary position (83%, n=5) or due to their college schedule (17%, n=1). The majority of students (83%, n=5) stated that they

are not looking for future work while enrolled in college. Similar to their employed peers, the majority of former students (83%) did not request accommodations in their job. A student (17%) did request and receive accommodations. However, that person was unable to remember the kind of accommodation.

In the 2009 cohort, out of 75% (n=3) employed, there was only one former student who met the category of being previously employed. Muslin has been unemployed for more than 12 months. In the past, she specifically focused on positions that were volunteer-based. In the last job, she worked less than 20 hours per week. In her position, she had different responsibilities. She assisted in scanning medical documents into a new electronic system. In addition, she helped translate documents from Spanish to English. She made phone calls in Spanish to inform the patients about the new system. The volunteer position was a temporary entry-level one. She received no benefits or pay for her work. She found her position by talking with family and friends. She did not request or receive accommodations in her volunteer position. At the time of the interview, she was not looking for work. She was in the process of preparing for graduation in December 2013 with plans to start looking for work in January 2014.

The 2010 cohort had two former students who have been previously employed. Miles and Jake had been employed for less than six months. In their last job, both worked 21-35 hours per week. Miles worked at the True Value Hardware Store. Jake had a paid internship at GWU. They received about \$8.63 per hour for their work. Miles considered his last position to be a semi-skilled that required training or experience for about a year. Jake stated that his internship was an entry-level position. Miles shared that his position provided benefits, including vacation, sick days or sick leave, health insurance, and

pension/retirement. Jake relayed that his benefits, such as vacation or sick days, came with permission from his supervisor. Miles found his job by talking with family and friends. Jake came by his position by attending a job fair and relaying to people that he had interned before on GWU's campus while in high school. Miles did share that he did request and receive accommodations in his last job but could not remember the specific accommodation. Jake did not request accommodations during his internship. Miles and Jake are not currently trying to find another job due to their being enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

In the 2011 cohort, there were three former students who had been previously employed. Juan, Sam, and Mike have been unemployed less than six months. Juan, in his last job, worked 36-40 hours per week at Graver Screen Productions. Sam and Mike worked 21-35 hours per week at U.S. States Mint Department. On average, they received \$8.08 an hour. Juan's position was an entry-level position that required little or no training. Sam and Mike stated that their positions were semi-skilled and usually required training or experience for about a year. As far as benefits, Juan received vacation and sick leave. Sam and Mike received no benefits. Juan found his job by talking with friends and family. Sam and Mike found their positions in the federal government through DC Employment Youth. All three former students did not request workplace accommodations. Since this position, Juan has been seeking another job. He shares that his "...hardest challenge (of getting into the job market) is probably going to interviews and stepping in." Sam and Mike are currently not seeking another position while enrolled in college.

Never Employed

There was only one former student, Ryan, from the 2009 cohort, who has not been employed since leaving high school. He is not looking for work because he is currently enrolled at a local community college. He commented that he needed to be focused only on his studies: "...It would be hard for me to keep up with my school work and an actual job right now." At the time of the interview, he was working towards his Associate's degree and could not anticipate his graduation date.

Summary

Almost all the former students (94%, n=15) have held jobs since leaving or graduating high school. There was only one student (6%, n=1) who has not been employed since leaving high school. A little over half of the former students (56%, n=9) are currently employed and found their current positions by networking with family and friends (33%, n=3), checking job engine websites (22%, n=2), through agencies that assist individuals with disabilities (22%, n=2), and other (22%, n=2). Former students (78%, n=7) mostly held entry-level positions in the workplace. A little over half of the former students (56%, n=5) worked less than 20 hours per week. Some former students received benefits in their positions: vacation time (33%, n=3), health (33%, n=3), sick days/leave (33%, n=3), and retirement (22%, n=2). A small group of former students (44%, n=4) did not receive any benefits with their position. A former student (11%, n=1) was unaware of receiving any type of benefit connected with the positions. A significant number of former students (89%, n=8) did not request accommodations in the workplace. A former student (11%, n=1) was unaware of the disclosure process.

Former students (83%, n=5) who had been previously employed have been unemployed during the last six months. This group of former students (83%, n=5) is not seeking work while enrolled in college. Most of these former students found their previous positions by networking with family and friends (50%, n=3), through an agency (34%, n=2), and through high school experience (17%, n=1). Former students considered themselves as working in entry-level (50%, n=3) and semi-skilled (50%, n =3) positions. A majority of former students (67%, n=4) worked 21-35 hours per week. Half of these former students received vacation time (50%, n=3) and sick days (50%, n=3). A couple of former students received additional benefits, such as health insurance (17%, n=1) and retirement (17%, n=1). Half of the former students (50%, n=3) received no benefits in their previous position. Similar to their employed peers, a significant number of former students (83%, n=5) did not request or receive accommodations in their last position. A former student (17%, n=1) did request and receive accommodations, but at the time of the interview could not remember the accommodations received.

RQ 1, Pt. 3: What are the post-school outcomes in the area of independent living of young adults with LD that completed and participated in the KTP at a private secondary school for students with LD?

Independent Living

Former students shared information about their current living arrangement, where they expect their living arrangements to be in a year or two years, as well as the methods of transportation they use on a regular basis. The majority of former students are currently living with their families (56%, n=9), with a few living with roommates (25%, n=4), on a college campus (13%, n=2), and/or with a spouse (6%, n=1) (see Figure 21 and Table 75). Fifty percent of the 2009 cohort currently lives with their family, with a roommate (25%, n=1), or with a spouse (25%, n=1) (see Table 76). The 2010 cohort was the only small group of students (67%, n=2) that did not have a majority of students living with their families (see Table 77). The majority of former students (67%, n=2) lived with a roommate either on or off campus while one student (33%, n=1) lived with his or her family. Similar to the 2009 cohort, the 2011 cohort is currently living with their families (67%, n=6), with a roommate (11%, n=1), and/or on a college campus (22%, n=2) (see Table 78).

Former students were also asked to envision what their living arrangements would be in a year or two. Some former students have the expectation of continuing to live with their families (25%, n=4), with some students planning to live alone (31.25%, n=5) or with a roommate (12.5%, n=2). Some former students plan to continue living on campus (12.5%, n=2), with their spouse (12.5%, n=2), or have no plans (6.25%, n=1). The 2009 cohort foresees living with a spouse (50%, n=2) or with family (25%, n=1). A former student (25%, n=1), from the 2009 cohort has no plans with regards to future living

arrangements. The 2010 cohort plans living on a college campus (off-campus) (33.33%, n=1), with a roommate (33.33%, n=1), or with family (33.33%, n=1). Those in the 2011 cohort have plans to live alone (56%, n=5), with a roommate (11%, n=1), with family (22%, n=2), or on a college campus (11%, n=1).

Figure 21. Current living arrangements of former students

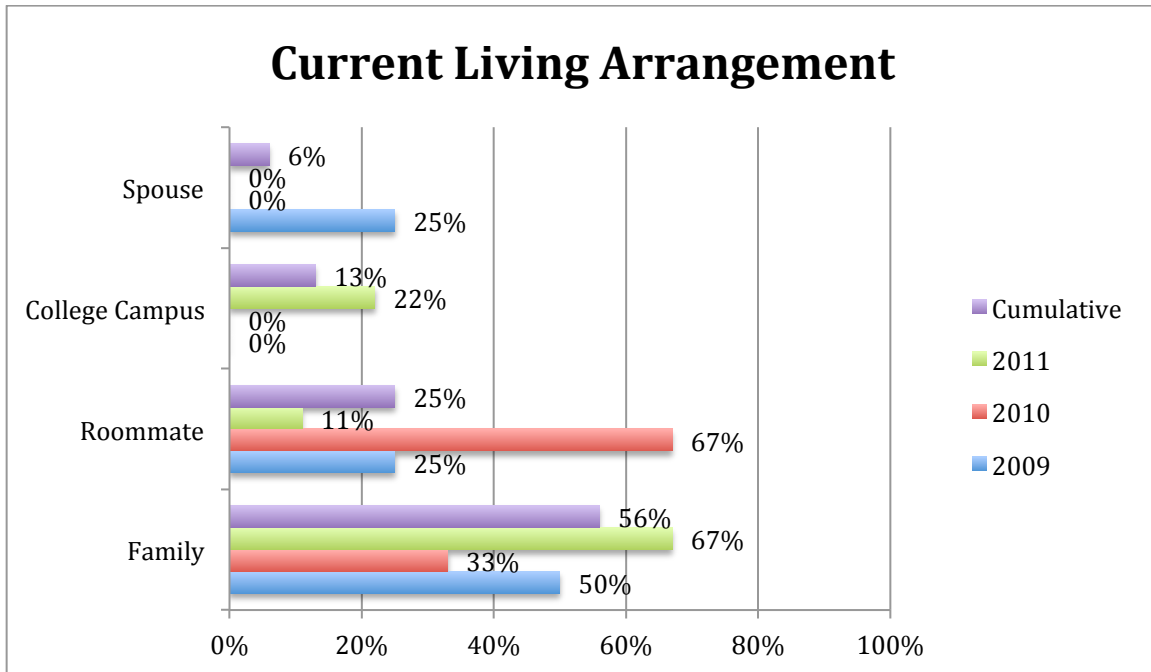


Table 75

Number of students by their current living arrangements, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Current Living Arrangement	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Spouse	1	6%
College Campus	2	13%
Roommate	4	25%
Family	9	56%
Total	16	100%

Table 76

Number of students by their current living arrangements, from the 2009 cohort

Current Living Arrangement	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Spouse	1	25%
College Campus	0	0%
Roommate	1	25%
Family	2	50%
Total	4	100%

Table 77

Number of students by their current living arrangements, from the 2010 cohort

Current Living Arrangement	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Spouse	0	0%
College Campus	0	0%
Roommate	2	67%
Family	1	33%
Total	3	100%

Table 78

Number of students by their current living arrangements, from the 2011 cohort

Current Living Arrangement	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Spouse	0	0%
College Campus	2	22%
Roommate	1	11%
Family	6	67%
Total	9	100%

Former students used several different types of transportation on a regular basis (see Figure 22 and Table 79). Every single cohort (100%, N=16) used walking as their primary method to get to where they need to be in the community and on campus. In addition, former students used the public bus and mass transit (94%, n=15) as well as relied on friends and family (81%, n=13) to get to their destination (see Table 79). On some occasions, former students would use a taxi (63%, n=10). On rare occasions, former students would use a bike, scooter, and/or skateboard (44%, n=7) or a car (38%, n=6) to

get to their destination. The 2009 cohort relied on the following types of transportation: walking (100%, n=4); mass transit (e.g., metro or bus) (75%, n=3); taxi (50%, n=2); family and friends (50%, n=2); and car (25%, n=1); bike, scooter, or skateboard (25%, n=1) (see Table 80). The 2010 cohort used the following modes of transportation: walking (100%, n=3), mass transit (100%, n=3), and friends and family (100%, n=3) (see Table 81). Former students would use a bike, scooter, or skateboard (33%, n=1), car (33%, n=1), and/or taxi (33%, n=1) infrequently. The 2011 cohort frequently used the following modes of transportation: walking (100%, n=9), mass transit (100%, n=9), friends and family (89%, n=8), and taxi (78%, n=7) (see Table 82). They used a bike (56%, n=5) and car (44%, n=4) less frequently. Overall, former students used several different types of transportation to get to their destination. The former students depended on walking, mass transit, friends and family, and a taxi service to take them to places in the community. A very small number of former students have access to a car.

Figure 22. Methods of transportation used by former students

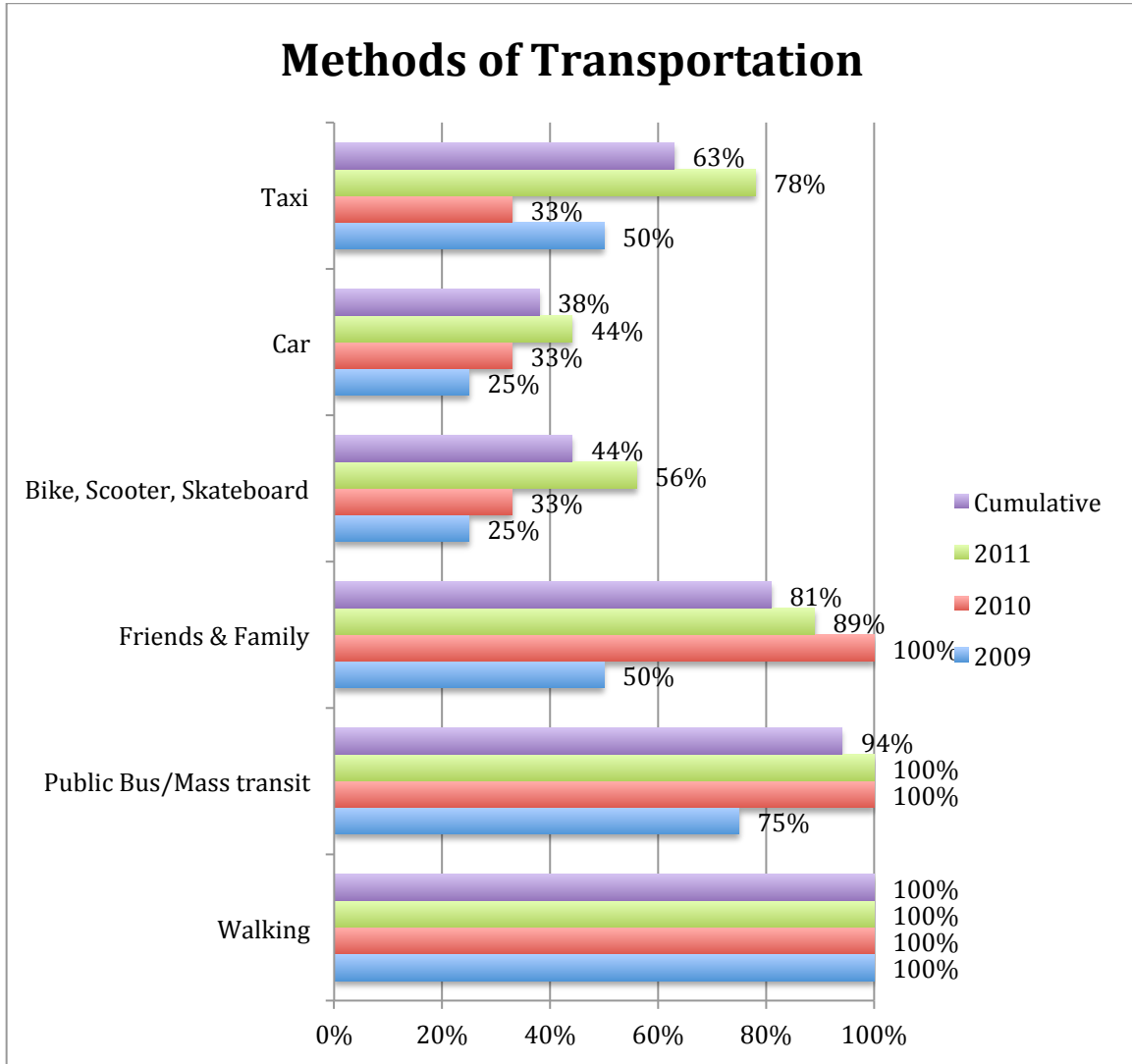


Table 79
Number of students by modes of transportation utilized, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Methods of Transportation*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Taxi	10	63%
Car	6	38%
Bike, Scooter, Skateboard	7	44%
Friends & Family	13	81%
Public Bus/Mass Transit	15	94%
Walking	16	100%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Table 80

Number of students by modes of transportation utilized, from the 2009 cohort

Methods of Transportation*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Taxi	2	50%
Car	1	25%
Bike, Scooter, Skateboard	1	25%
Friends & Family	2	50%
Public Bus/Mass Transit	3	75%
Walking	4	100%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Table 81

Number of students by modes of transportation utilized, from the 2010 cohort

Methods of Transportation*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Taxi	1	33%
Car	1	33%
Bike, Scooter, Skateboard	1	33%
Friends & Family	3	100%
Public Bus/Mass Transit	3	100%
Walking	3	100%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Table 82

Number of students by modes of transportation utilized, from the 2011 cohort

Methods of Transportation*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Taxi	7	78%
Car	4	44%
Bike, Scooter, Skateboard	5	56%
Friends & Family	8	89%
Public Bus/Mass Transit	9	100%
Walking	9	100%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied to them.

Summary

The majority of former students live with their families (56%, n=9), with a roommate (25%, n=4), on a college campus (13%, n=2), and/or with a spouse (6%, n=1).

In planning ahead, former students anticipate living on their own (31%, n=5), with a roommate (13%, n=2), and/or continue to live with their families (25%, n=4). Former students use different modes of transportation to get to their destination. A high portion

of former students relied on the public transit (e.g., metro bus or metro) (94%, n=15) as well as family and friends (81%, n=13) to get from place to place. All former students (100%, N=16) used walking as their primary mode of transportation.

RQ 2: How satisfied are young adults with LD with their quality of life in the postsecondary environment? (Education, Employment, and Independent Living)

Level of Satisfaction

Former students were asked questions about their quality of life in their postsecondary education environment. Former students shed light on their levels of satisfaction in the areas of education, employment, and independent living. First, postsecondary education focused on current levels of satisfaction with their current institution or with changing to another institution. Secondly, former students received questions on employment that focused on satisfaction in their current job or to determine if they would rather work somewhere else. Third, former students shared their levels of satisfaction about their current living condition by sharing their likes and dislikes. Fourth, former students shared their overall satisfaction with their life. Lastly, former students provided details about their connection with social service agencies that could possibly assist students in reaching their life goals.

Postsecondary education

Former students were requested to share their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their postsecondary institution. Former students could select one of the following response options: (a) satisfied with postsecondary institution, (b) dissatisfied with postsecondary institution, or (c) opted not to answer (Appendix E). Currently enrolled former students (75%, n=9) reflecting on their postsecondary education experience were satisfied with their current institution (see Figure 23 and Table

83). There were a few former students (25%, n=3) who were dissatisfied and would have preferred to switch to another school (see Figure 23 and Table 83). The 2009 and 2010 cohorts of students (100%, n=5) reported that they were satisfied with their institution (see Table 84 and 85). The 2011 cohort leaned towards being satisfied (57%, n=4) with postsecondary institution (Table 86). Students in the 2011 cohort reported being dissatisfied (43%, n=3) with their postsecondary institution (see Table 86).

Overall, former students (75%, n=9) are satisfied with their current postsecondary institution. A former student chose to share additional insight about why he is satisfied. Adam (2009) recalled how he was not satisfied at first. He attends a small Historically Black College/University (HBCU) in Maryland with a student body of 4,000. He has developed a deep appreciation for the benefits the institution has to offer, including the opportunity to embrace his ethnicity. Adam shared his thoughts about his initial plans for college and why he chose a HBCU.

To be honest, when I first graduated I wanted to go away from home. The area of Wisconsin was my first decision, but my mom didn't want me to go that far, so I had to stay on the east coast. But going to an HBCU, it wasn't my first choice, but at the same time, I realized that it was time for me to be around my ethnicity more.

In addition, Adam shared his thoughts on how a smaller college can provide a more supportive environment than a larger university:

...I feel like a small institution...definitely helped me progress in my education, because I could be around a small collective family and they could teach me

certain things that a big institution would have probably passed or wouldn't even consider teaching me.

Adam recognized the uniqueness of attending a smaller institution that provided him with additional support.

As noted earlier, overall, a small group of former students (25%, n=3) were dissatisfied with their institution. Former students (43%, n=3) from the 2011 cohort expressed their dissatisfaction with their institution. Students voiced a variety of reasons as to why they were dissatisfied. Rachel noted that she found her institution kind of boring. Rachel did not elaborate as whether it was "boring" due to the class format, teaching methods of faculty, and/or the social life offered. John would have preferred to attend a four-year university instead of a community college. Malik expressed dissatisfaction because he wanted to get away from the greater DC area.

Summary

As a group, the majority of former students are satisfied (75%, n=9) with their postsecondary institutions. Adam provided insight into how a small college can be more culturally aware as well as supportive. A small group of former students (25%, n=3) are dissatisfied with their postsecondary institution and would like to switch to another institution. They provided a few reasons as to why they were dissatisfied: being "boring," completing a community college program and being ready for a four-year college program, and being unhappy with the location of the institution.

Figure 23. Levels of satisfaction with postsecondary institution

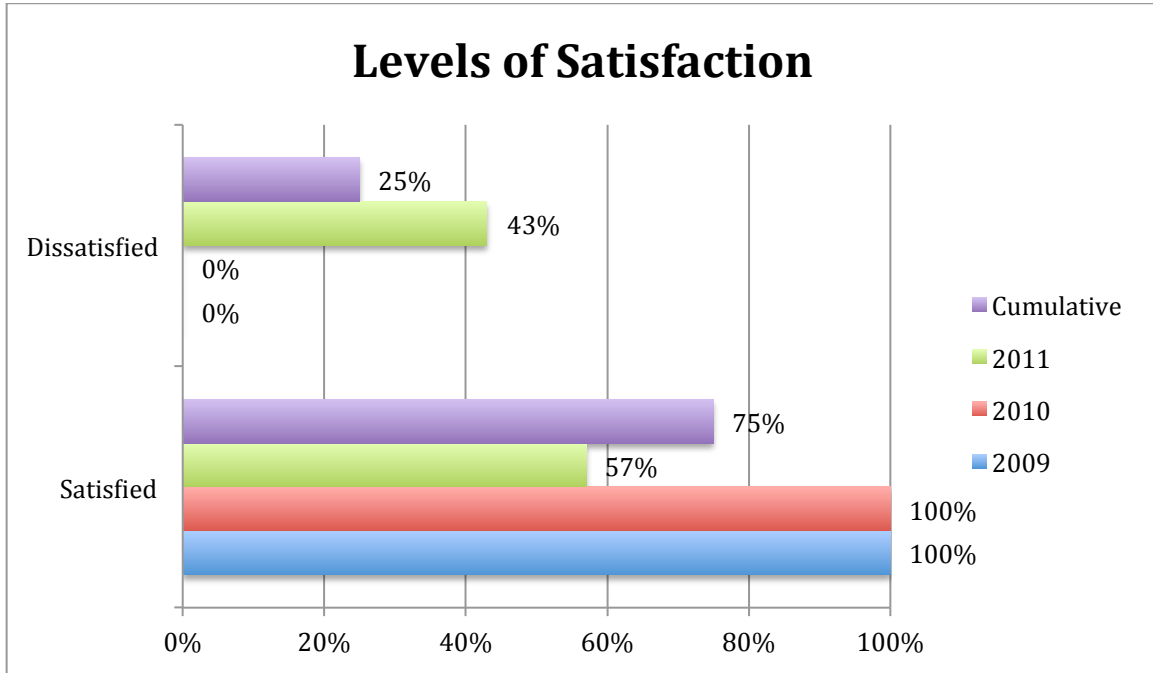


Table 83

Number of students by levels of satisfaction with their postsecondary institution, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Levels of Satisfaction	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Dissatisfied	3	25%
Satisfied	9	75%
Total	12	100%

Table 84

Number of students by levels of satisfaction with their postsecondary institution, from the 2009 cohort

Levels of Satisfaction	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Satisfied	2	100%
Total	2	100%

Table 85

Number of students by levels of satisfaction with their postsecondary institution, from the 2010 cohort

Levels of Satisfaction	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Satisfied	3	100%
Total	3	100%

Table 86

Number of students by levels of satisfaction with their postsecondary institution, from the 2011 cohort

Levels of Satisfaction	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Dissatisfied	3	43%
Satisfied	4	57%
Total	7	100%

Employment

Former students currently employed were asked for their level of satisfaction with their job and if they would rather work somewhere else. The first question addressed how satisfied they were in their current job. Students had the following response options: (a) satisfied, (b) want to change, (c) mixed, depends, varies, (d) don't know, and (e) opted not to answer. The second question asked if students would rather work somewhere else. Student simply could respond (a) yes or (b) no. Former students (67%, n=6) reported that they are satisfied in their current job and preferred not to work somewhere else. A few former students (33%, n=3) disclosed that they were dissatisfied in their current job and wanted to work somewhere else. The 2009 cohort was evenly split between being satisfied (50%, n=1) and dissatisfied (50%, n=1). The 2010 cohort (100%, n=1) was satisfied in their current jobs and preferred not to change positions. The 2011 cohort reported high job satisfaction (67%, n=4) with a few former students (33%, n=2) who were dissatisfied and wanted to work somewhere else. Overall, former students (67%, n=6) are satisfied in their current jobs. There is a small group of former students (33%, n=3) who expressed dissatisfaction and would prefer to work somewhere else.

Independent Living

Former students from all three cohorts were requested to voice their opinions about their current living arrangements and share their likes and dislikes about their current living conditions. Former students in the 2009 cohort relayed their likes and dislikes about their living arrangements. Freddy⁷ currently lives at home with his wife. He likes that it is home. He dislikes that he lives in a bad neighborhood. He wants to live in a better neighborhood in a year. Muslin enjoys sharing her apartment with a roommate off campus. She likes that it is a “spacious” and “large” apartment. She dislikes that the carpet is not clean and the heater is faulty. Adam appreciates that he can save money while living at home with his family. He values the support he receives from family and friends that enables him to be independent. He commented on how he feels about the importance of having role models to learn independent living skills:

...I am independent, but it's good to have my parents, siblings, and my friends around to really enforce that in me, to really give me an example how to do that, or show me examples.

However, he recognizes the lack of privacy and space while living with his family. He shares his thoughts about being older and the need for having his own personal space:

As I'm getting older, I'm realizing how much I want to be alone and how much like living in my own space will be so beneficial to me, and I need to really just be alone, because I just do so many things to a point where having all the people in one house is not fun.

⁷ Freddy did not finish high school; he was included in the sample because his story is important.

Ryan currently lives with his dad and expressed satisfaction in assisting with household chores. In addition, he enjoys living close to places such as the zoo. He reported no dislikes about living at home. Overall, the 2009 cohort has positive opinions about their current living arrangements. A couple of former students have their eye on changing their living arrangements. A couple of students shared the drawbacks on their current living arrangement that includes lack of privacy and personal space as well as home maintenance issues.

The 2010 cohort shared positive and negative opinions about their current living arrangements. Miles lives on campus in the dorms and enjoys having quiet time. He likes to “hang out” and “have fun” with his peers in their rooms. He dislikes the loud parties fueled by alcohol. Michael lives in an apartment with a roommate from school. He appreciates his independence. He dislikes having to pay rent and bills. Jake lives with his family while commuting to school. He likes that he has access to public transportation to get to and from school. He did not share any dislikes about his current living situation. Those in the 2010 cohort have positive feelings about their current living arrangement. A couple of former students shared their dislikes, such as loud parties and responsibilities with regards to paying bills.

The 2011 cohort shared similar likes and dislikes about their current living arrangements. Sue enjoys living with five roommates, who also happen to be her friends, in a dorm on a college campus. She feels that she can relax when she is home. Similar to Jake, she did not report any dislikes about her current living arrangement. Sam finds living on campus to be “comfortable.” He dislikes that he lives far from home. Mike,

similar to Sam, lives on campus. He enjoys "...meeting new people, interacting with new people." He dislikes problems that happen on campus.

Alicia lives at home with her family. She likes that she comes home to a house each day. She voices similar feelings to Adam. She is ready to move out and be on her own. Rachel, John, Juan, and Malik live with their respective families. They all enjoy the benefit of living at home without having to pay bills. John shared that he does pay for his food while living at home. Rachel, John, and Malik do not like the lack of privacy, freedom, and space that comes with living at home. Rachel added that she has "...too many chores" to do at home. Juan reveals that he dislikes everything that comes with living at home. Darrow lives with his sister. He enjoys the freedom that comes with living with his sister as well being able to hang out with his friends. He thinks it is cool that he is developing a closer relationship with his sister everyday. The only drawback that comes from living with his sister is that, at times, they have confrontations. He shares that they make every effort to work through their disagreements in a timely manner.

Overall, the 2011 cohort, especially those who currently live their families, shared that they liked the benefit of not having to pay bills. However, they reported a lack of privacy and freedom that comes with living at home. The former students who live away at college have positive feelings about their current living arrangement (e.g., friends, meeting new people). A couple of students shared their dislike of living far away from home and the problems that comes from living on campus.

Former students who live at home with their families appreciate such benefits as financial support. However, former students struggle with the lack of privacy and freedom that comes from living with their families. Former students who live on or off

campus appreciate their independence and being able to hang out with their friends. A few former students found drawbacks to their living conditions, such as maintenance and campus issues as well as loud parties.

Overall Satisfaction

At the end of the interview, all former students were asked to report how satisfied they were with their life right now. Students had the following response options: (a) very satisfied, (b) satisfied, (c), unsure, (d) dissatisfied, (e) very dissatisfied, or (f) no answer. Former students reported that they were satisfied (50%, n=8) and very satisfied (50%, n=8) with their life right now. The 2009 cohort was split evenly between being satisfied (50%, n=2) and very satisfied (50%, n=2) with their lives right now. Ryan shared that he was satisfied with his life although he does find life challenging. Those in the 2010 cohort reported high levels of satisfaction with their lives. Former students conveyed that they were very satisfied (67%, n=2) and satisfied (33%, n=1). Miles shared that he was very satisfied and that his life was "...95% better." The 2011 cohort shared that they were satisfied (56%, n=5) and very satisfied (44%, n=4). Alicia, Rachel, John, Juan, and Malik reported being satisfied with their lives. John added an additional comment stating that, "I could do better. I will accomplish my goals so I'll be satisfied in three years. But I am very okay with my life right now." Sue, Darrow, Sam, and Mike shared the same thoughts about being very satisfied with their lives. Darrow, who works at a funeral home, remarked on his feelings about his life, noting that "I love my life. As it concerns, as it matters, going back to the funeral home, I view life, I enjoy life better. I appreciate every day that I am given." Overall, all former students are satisfied or very satisfied with their lives.

Social Service Agencies

Former students were asked if they met with a Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA-DC), Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS-VA), or Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS-MD) counselor while in high school. Former students who were enrolled at the Kingsbury Center were from the greater DC region that included the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. They would meet with the appropriate vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor based on their parent/guardian's address.

Overall, a high number of former students (69%, n=11) stated that they did meet with a VR counselor while in high school. A few former students reported that they did not meet (19%, n=3) or were unsure (13%, n=2) if they met with a VR counselor in high school. The 2009 cohort (100%, n=4) reported that they all did meet with a counselor while enrolled in high school. However, half of those in the 2009 cohort (50%, n=2) when followed up with additional questions later in the interview about services they are currently receiving from VR stated that they did not receive any services from VR. The 2010 cohort reported that the majority of former students (67%, n=2) did meet with a counselor while in high school. There was one student (33%, n=1) who was unsure about whether he met with someone from VR initially in high school. When he was followed up with additional questions, he stated that he did not receive any current services from VR. Those in the 2011 cohort reported that they met with a VR counselor (56%, n=5), did not meet with a counselor (33%, n=3), and/or were unsure (11%, n=1). Juan shared that he met with a counselor in high school. When he was asked follow-up questions about services currently received, he did not mention or highlight VR. Malik voiced that

he was unsure if he met with a VR counselor. He recalled that he needed documents from his parents. He thought that his parents did not submit the documents to the VR counselor. Miles reported that he did not meet with the VR counselor while in high school. However, he did mention that he currently receives services from VR.

Former students shared information about the services they currently receive from agencies (see Figure 24 and Table 87). Collectively, they reported using the following agencies or services: RSA (63%, n=10), Medicaid (31%, n=5), Mental Health (13%, n=2), Food Stamps (6%, n=1), and Housing Assistance (6%, n=1) (see Table 87). A small group of former students (19%, n=3) reported using none of the agencies or services (see Table 87). The 2009 cohort reported using the following agencies or services: RSA (50%, n=2), Food Stamps (25%, n=1), Medicaid (25%, n=1), and Housing Assistance (25%, n=1) (see Table 88). There was only one student who reported using none of the services or agencies. The 2010 cohort reported using only two agencies: RSA (67%, n=2) and mental health services (67%, n=2) (see Table 89). Similar to the previous cohort, there was only one student who was using none of the services or agencies. Similar to the previous cohort, the 2011 one reported accessing only two agencies: RSA (67%, n=6) and Medicaid (44%, n=4) (see Table 90). Again, there was only one student who reported using none of the services or agencies.

Figure 24. Current Agencies and Services Former Students Reported Using

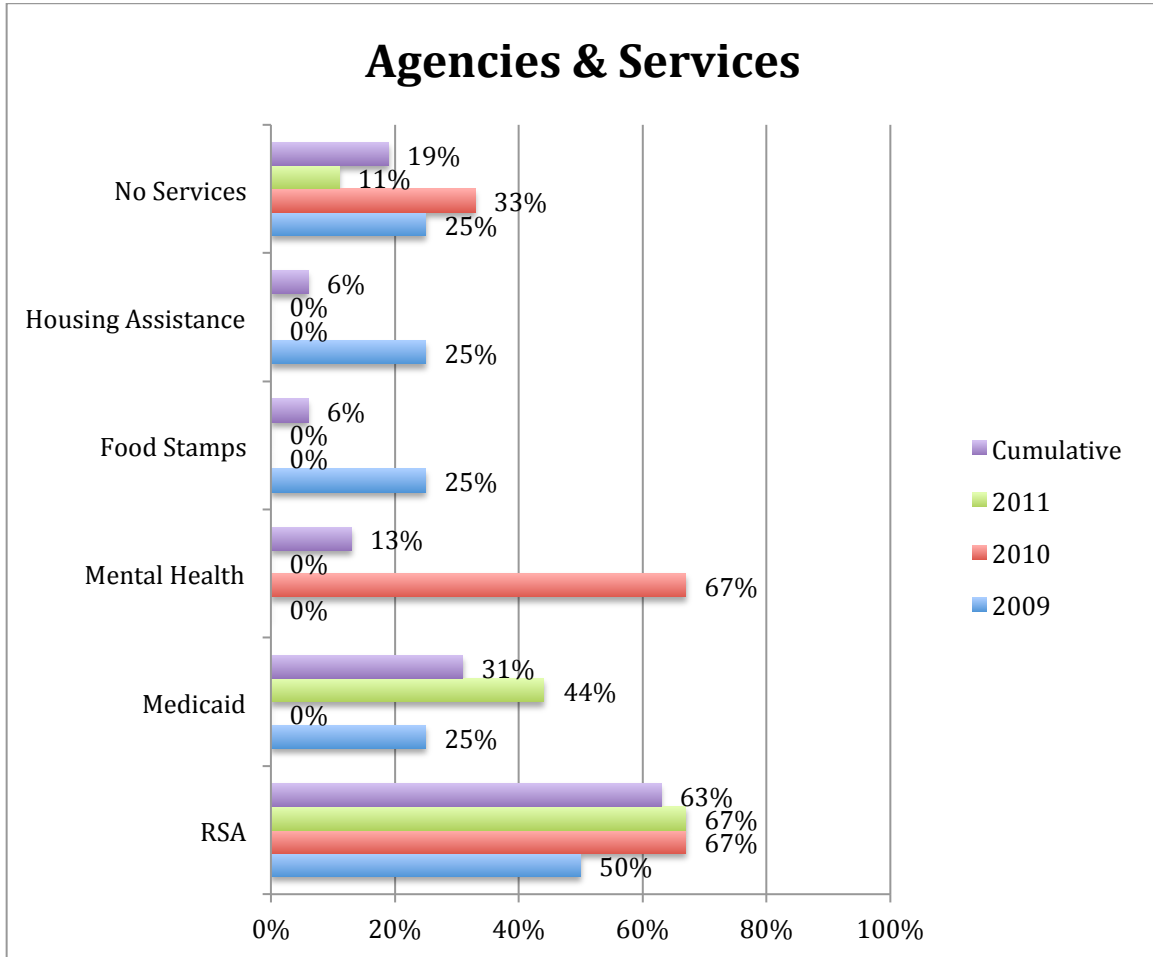


Table 87

Number of students reported using the following type of agencies and services, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Agencies & Services*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No Services	3	19%
Housing Assistance	1	6%
Food Stamps	1	6%
Mental Health	2	13%
Medicaid	5	31%
RSA	10	63%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 88

Number of students reported using the following type of agencies and services, from the 2009 cohort

Agencies & Services*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No Services	1	25%
Housing Assistance	1	25%
Food Stamps	1	25%
Mental Health	0	0%
Medicaid	1	25%
RSA	2	50%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 89

Number of students reported using the following type of agencies and services, from the 2010 cohort

Agencies & Services*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No Services	1	33%
Housing Assistance	0	0%
Food Stamps	0	0%
Mental Health	2	67%
Medicaid	0	0
RSA	2	67%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 90

Number of students reported using the following type of agencies and services, from the 2011 cohort

Agencies & Services*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
No Services	1	11%
Housing Assistance	0	0%
Food Stamps	0	0%
Mental Health	0	0%
Medicaid	4	44%
RSA	6	67%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

If former students reported that they received vocational rehabilitation services, they were asked follow-up questions, which determined if the former students had met with the VR counselor since high school and if the services received had been helpful in assisting them in reaching their employment goals. All former students (100%, n=12)

from all three cohorts who claimed to have received VR services since leaving high school have met with a counselor. The majority of former students (67%, n=8) had found the services to be helpful in reaching their employment goals. There were a few former students (33%, n=4) who did not find the services beneficial in helping them reach their employment goals. The 2009 and 2010 cohorts were evenly split between finding RSA services helpful (50%, n=2) and not helpful (50%, n=2) towards reaching their employment goals. Muslin (2009) commented on how she found RSA services not to be helpful, “No, not really—we came above the income mark that cut us off from the services because we were well off. So I haven’t received services for about 2 years now.” Prior to this, Muslin received financial assistance with tuition and books from RSA. Those in the 2011 cohort (75%, n=6) found the RSA services to be helpful. A small group did not find RSA services to be helpful (25%, n=2) in reaching their employment goals.

The last question requested of former students was to share the types of services or assistance they received from the agencies. Former students stated that RSA assisted them with financial help (83%, n=10), internships/programs (17%, n=2), FAFSA (8%, n=1), and applying to school (8%, n=1). There was only one student (2010) who shared information about receiving assistance from another source. The student received mental health services at college. Former students who stated receiving other types of assistance (as shown in Figure 24) did not elaborate how the service was assisting them in their daily lives. Students just focused on sharing how RSA services had assisted them.

The 2009 and 2010 cohort stated that RSA provided financial assistance in college towards their tuition and fees as well as books. Miles (2010) shared that his

counselor assisted him in finding internships that related to his employment goals. Those in the 2011 cohort shared that RSA assisted them with financial help (75%, n=6), applying to school (13%, n=1), project search (13%, n=1), and filling out FAFSA (13%, n=1). John (2011) commented on how the financial support from RSA assisted him: “It helped. They provided money to go to school and for books. And with me going to school, I can achieve getting a degree so that I can get a great job.” Darrow (2011) shared how RSA provided financial assistance in the workplace. They provided funding towards his uniforms and transportation. Sam and Mike (2011) conveyed that in addition to tuition support, RSA provided assistive-technology devices to use throughout their college experience. Alicia (2011) appreciated how RSA assisted her in getting placed into GWU Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH was an 11-month internship program on the GWU campus that provided young adults (18-29) with disabilities with work experiences to help them reach their employment goals.

Summary

Former students shared their levels of satisfaction with regards to postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. In addition, former students reported their level of overall satisfaction with their lives. Last but not least, former students communicated if they found services and agencies helpful or not helpful towards their employment goals. Overall, students (75%, n=9) expressed satisfaction with their current postsecondary institution. There was a small group of former students (25%, n=3) who were dissatisfied and would prefer to switch to another institution. As a whole, former students (67%, n=6) are satisfied in their current job. There were a few former students (33%, n=3) who are dissatisfied with their jobs and would prefer to switch to a new job.

Former students communicated what they liked and disliked about their living conditions. They lived with their family or on/off campus. Former students who lived with their families liked the financial support but did not like the lack of privacy and freedom. Former students who lived on or off campus liked their independence and being able to hang out with their friends, but they did not like the problems that come with living on or off campus, such as loud parties. All former students (100%, n=16) reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their lives.

Lastly, former students shared their interaction with social service agencies. Most former students (69%, n=11) did meet with a VR counselor while in high school. There were a few students who did not meet with a counselor (19%, n=3) or were unsure if they met with a counselor (13%, n=2). Collectively, former students have had contact with the following agencies: RSA (63%, n=10), Medicaid (31%, n=5), Mental Health (13%, n=2), Food Stamps (6%, n=1), and Housing Assistance (6%, n=1). All former students (100%, n=12) who have received RSA services have met with their VR counselor since high school. The majority of former students (67%, n=8) found RSA services helpful in reaching their employment goals. A small group of former students (33%, n=4) did not find RSA helpful in reaching their employment goals. Former students shared the following services they received from RSA: financial assistance (83%, n=10), internship/program opportunities (17%, n=2), FAFSA assistance (8%, n=1), and assistance with the college application (8%, n=1).

RQ 3: What aspects of the KTP are associated into postsecondary outcomes as perceived by young adults with LD?

Kingsbury Transition Program

The Kingsbury Transition Program (KTP) provided a tiered transition curriculum (see Figure 1, Chapter 1) for students that included individualized career exploration opportunities based on transition assessments. The career exploration opportunities included job site visits, job shadowing, and paid internships during the students' junior year of high school. The career exploration activities were a part of the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) program. The job site visits, job shadowing, and internship activities all took place on GWU's campus. In this follow-up study, former students were asked questions about their experiences related to the KTP and C.I.T.Y. programs. As stated earlier, there were a total of 16 students who participated in the follow-up study. All students had participated in the KTP by taking one or more transition classes (see Figure 1, Chapter 1). However, only 12 students participated in one or more activities related to the C.I.T.Y. program.

Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.)

Former students were requested to remember which activity of the C.I.T.Y. program they participated in during their junior year (see Figure 25 and Table 91). Overall, they reported participating in job site visits (100%, n=12), job shadowing (33%, n=4), and internships (75%, n=9) (see Table 91). The 2009 cohort shared that they participated in job site visits (100%, n=2) and internships (50%, n=1) (Table 92). They did not participate in any job shadowing activities. The 2010 cohort relayed that they participated in job site visits (100%, n=3), job shadowing (33%, n=1), and internships (100%, n=3) (see Table 93). The 2011 cohort reported that they participated in job site

visits (100%, n=7), job shadowing (43%, n=3), and internships (72%, n=5) (see Table 94). Overall, former students actively participated in one or more C.I.T.Y. career exploration activities.

Figure 25. C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities Experienced by Cohort

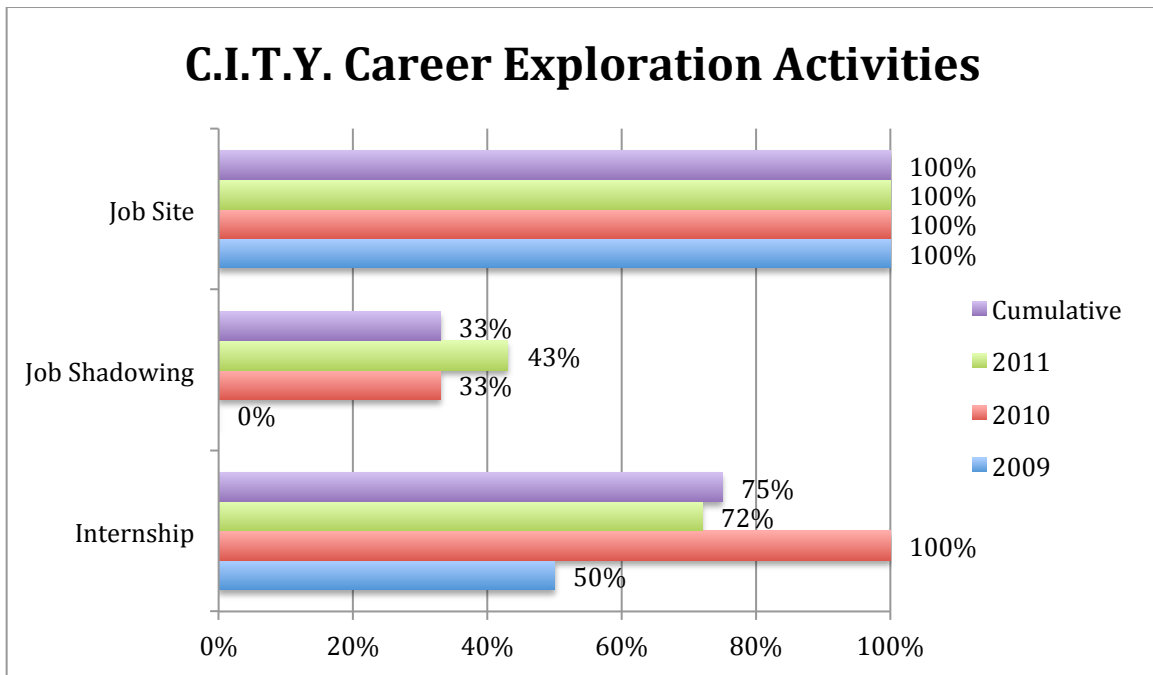


Table 91

Number of students who participated in the C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Job Site Visits	12	100%
Job Shadowing	4	33%
Internship	9	75%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 92

Number of students who participated in the C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities, from the 2009 cohort

C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Job Site Visits	2	100%
Job Shadowing	0	0%
Internship	1	50%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 93

Number of students who participated in the C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities, from the 2010 cohort

C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Job Site Visits	3	100%
Job Shadowing	1	33%
Internship	3	100%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 94

Number of students who participated in the C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities, from the 2011 cohort

C.I.T.Y. Career Exploration Activities*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Job Site Visits	7	100%
Job Shadowing	3	43%
Internship	5	72%

*Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Job Site Visits. The purpose of the job site visits, as envisioned by the Kingsbury Center, was to teach high school students about the different types of jobs that are offered within a department. Participants received an hour-long tour of the department by a manager and came to the site prepared to ask questions about the department and workplace culture. Kingsbury faculty supervised all job site visits. In the follow-up survey, former students were requested to remember the GWU departments (e.g., library, bookstore) they visited during their junior year (see Figure 26 and Table 95). Overall, all

former students (100%, n=12) recalled participating in the job site visits (see Table 95). The former students remembered visiting these departments: library (50%, n=6), bookstore (42%, n=5), health and wellness center (25%, n=3), ResNet/IT (25%, n=3), parking (17%, n=2), general counsel (17%, n=2), police (17%, n=2), Mt. Vernon campus (8%, n=1), radio (8%, n=1), theater (8%, n=1), fire department (8%, n=1), business (8%, n=1), and engineering (8%, n=1) (see Table 95). There was one former student who remembered participating in the job site visit. However, the former student could not remember where he/she went on campus. The 2009 cohort visited with the following departments: engineering (50%, n=1), business building (50%, n=1), health and wellness (50%, n=1), and bookstore (50%, n=1) (see Table 96). The 2010 cohort saw the following departments: library (67%, n=2), ResNet/IT (67%, n=2), Mt. Vernon campus (33%, n=1), radio (33%, n=1), parking (33%, n=1), and bookstore (33%, n=1) (see Table 97). The 2011 cohort remembered touring these departments: library (57%, n=4), bookstore (43%, n=3), general counsel (29%, n=2), health and wellness (29%, n=2), police (29%, n=2), parking (14%, n=1), fire department (14%, n=1), and ResNet/IT (14%, n=1) (see Table 98).

Figure 26. C.I.T.Y. Job Site Visits Experienced by Cohort

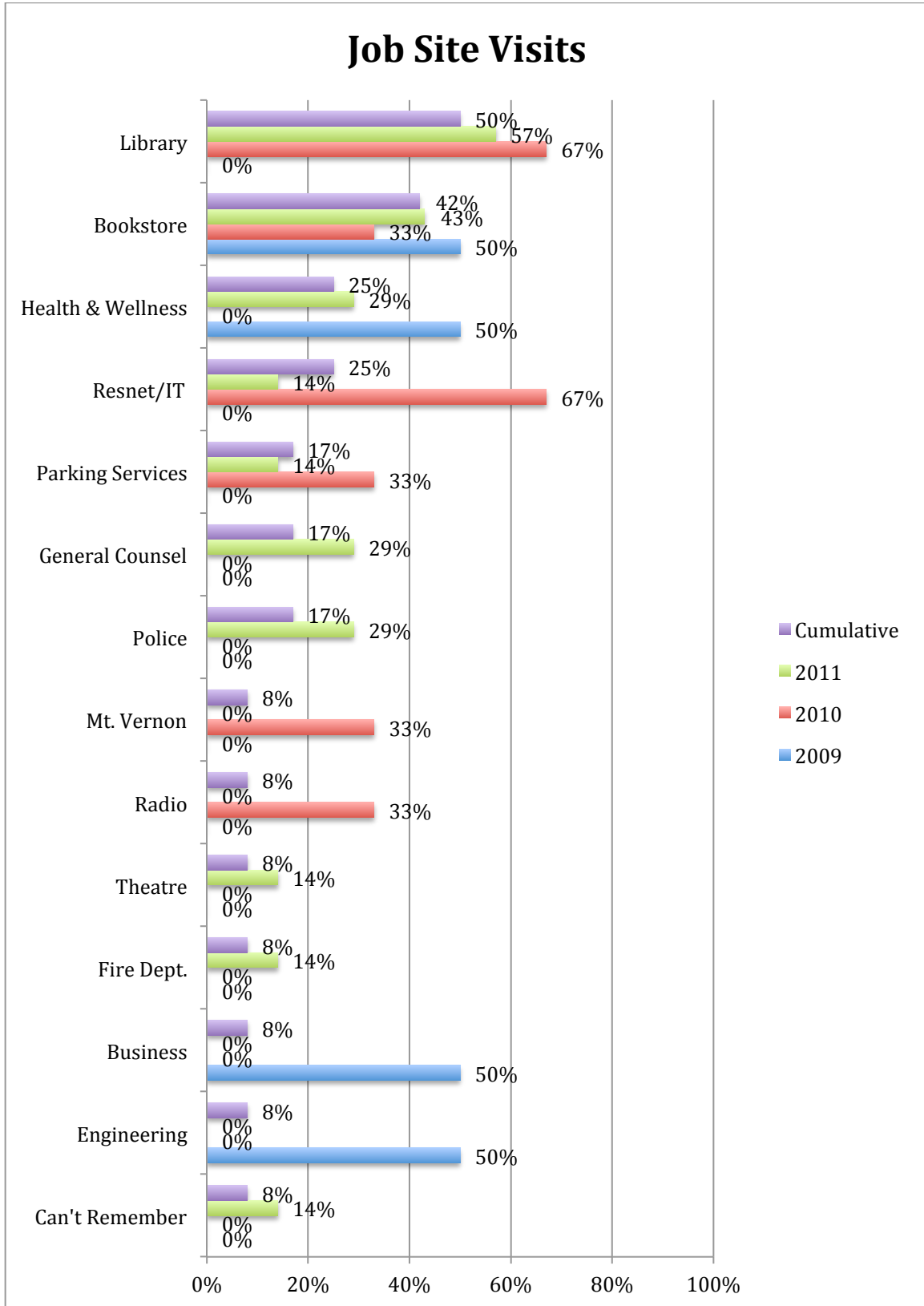


Table 95

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Site Visits, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Job Site Visits*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	6	50%
Bookstore	5	42%
Health & Wellness	3	25%
Resnet/IT	3	25%
Parking Services	2	17%
General Counsel	2	17%
Police	2	17%
Mt. Vernon	1	8%
Radio	1	8%
Theatre	1	8%
Fire Dept.	1	8%
Business	1	8%
Engineering	1	8%
Can't Remember	1	8%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 96

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Site Visits, from the 2009 cohort

Job Site Visits*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	0	0%
Bookstore	1	50%
Health & Wellness	1	50%
Resnet/IT	0	0%
Parking Services	0	0%
General Counsel	0	0%
Police	0	0%
Mt. Vernon	0	0%
Radio	0	0%
Theatre	0	0%
Fire Dept.	0	0%
Business	1	50%
Engineering	1	50%
Can't Remember	0	0%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 97

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Site Visits, from the 2010 cohort

Job Site Visits*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	2	67%
Bookstore	1	33%
Health & Wellness	0	0%
Resnet/IT	2	67%
Parking Services	1	33%
General Counsel	0	0%
Police	0	0%
Mt. Vernon	1	33%
Radio	1	33%
Theatre	0	0%
Fire Dept.	0	0%
Business	0	0%
Engineering	0	0%
Can't Remember	0	0%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Table 98

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Site Visits, from the 2011 cohort

Job Site Visits*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	4	57%
Bookstore	3	43%
Health & Wellness	2	29%
Resnet/IT	1	14%
Parking Services	1	14%
General Counsel	2	29%
Police	2	29%
Mt. Vernon	0	0%
Radio	0	0%
Theatre	1	14%
Fire Dept.	1	14%
Business	0	0%
Engineering	0	0%
Can't Remember	1	14%

* Former students could select one or all options that applied.

Former students were requested to share what they learned from the job site visits. Former students gained some workplace insights during the job site visits. A few students reflected on their experiences. Miles (2010) commented on learning about job responsibilities, taking initiative, organizational skills, and communication skills in the

workplace. In addition, Michael (2010) reflected on the availability of jobs on a college campus as well as options for the summer internship. Sam and Mike (2011) mentioned the importance of having prior job experience. Malik (2011) shared that the experience helped him focus more on a career than a job. Mike (2011) gained insight about the importance of leadership skills and customer service.

Job Shadowing. The next step, as envisioned by the Kingsbury Center, was to have students attend, based on their interests, two job shadowing activities at two different job sites on the GWU campus. Job shadowing consisted of a one-on-one meeting with an employer at the job site. Former students would shadow a manager or supervisor during their two-hour visit. The employer supervised students during this career-development activity. Students prepared a folder that included their résumé, questions for the employer, and research into the particular department. Overall, less than half of the former students (33%, n=4) recalled participating in the job shadowing activity (see Table 93). In addition, former students were unsure (36%, n=4) if they participated in the job shadowing activity (see Figure 27 and Table 99). Lastly, former students (27%, n=3) reported that they did not participate in the job shadowing activity at all (see Table 99). Those students who reported participating in the job shadowing activity remembered going to two departments, library (36%, n=4) and ResNet/IT (9%, n=1) (see Table 99). The 2009 cohort (100%, n=2) reported not participating in the job shadowing activity (see Table 100). The 2010 cohort reported the following outcomes: library (33%, n=1), no participation (33%, n=1), and unsure of participation (33%, n=1) (see Table 101). The 2011 cohort reported job shadowing at the following two job sites: library (50%, n=3)

and ResNet/IT (17%, n=1) (see Table 102). The rest of the 2011 cohort (50%, n=3) stated that they did not remember participating the job shadowing activity.

Similar to the job site visits, former students were requested to share what they learned at the job shadowing sites. The majority of students job shadowed either at the library or ResNet/IT department. Michael (2010) reflected that the experience enabled him to observe the inner workings of a campus library. He stated:

It actually was better than I thought it was going to be. I thought it was going to be really boring. It was actually kind of interesting. I just kind of learned how a university library worked and operated and how it was different from a normal public library or just any old library.

Jake (2010) had prior career exploration experience by working in the summer youth program. He felt he was more prepared than some of his peers. In addition, the job shadowing experience allowed him the opportunity to determine whether the workplace matched his interests. He shared that the job shadowing experience was about "...getting more experience working, what it's like to come in on time, what it's like to work, figuring out if this clicks with your personality or if it's within your interest category."

Sam (2011) and Mike (2011) both observed that customer service was an important service to provide at the library. In addition, Sam learned that being responsible and committed to the work is important. Mike observed that people enjoyed their jobs. This observation made him realize the importance of choosing a career that makes him happy.

Figure 27. C.I.T.Y. Job Shadowing Experienced by Cohort

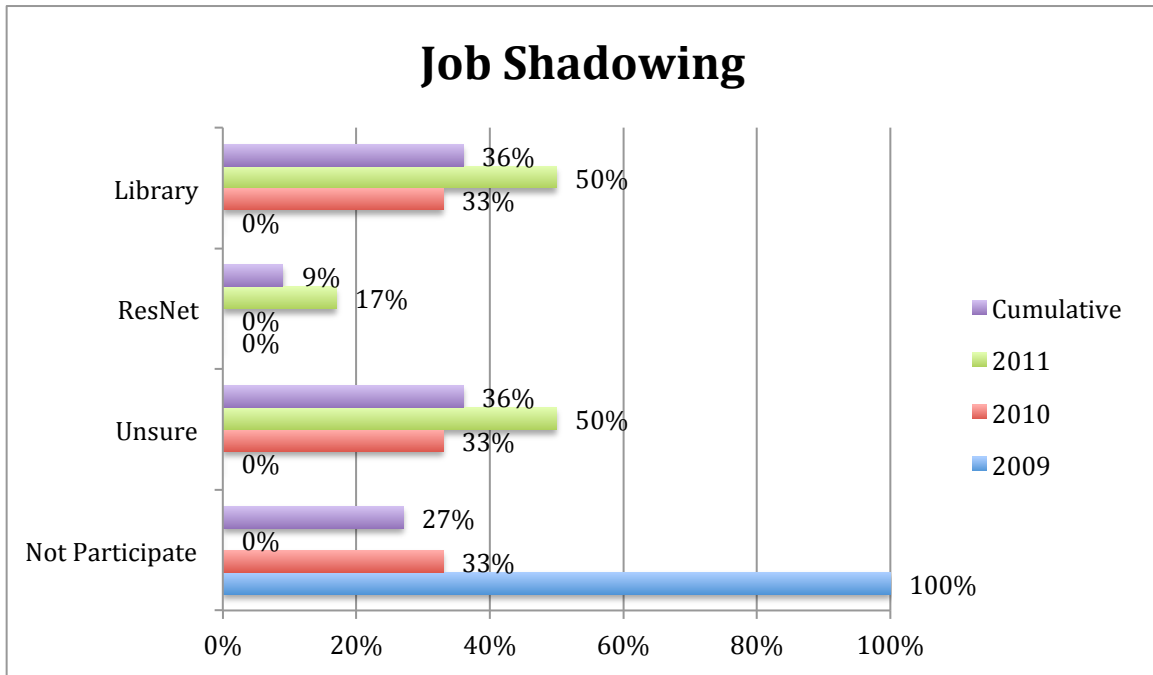


Table 99

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Shadowing, from the 2009-2011 cohort

Job Shadowing*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	4	36%
ResNet	1	9%
Unsure	4	36%
Not Participated	3	27%

* Former students could select up to two sites that applied.

Table 100

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Shadowing, from the 2009 cohort

Job Shadowing*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	0	0%
ResNet	0	0%
Unsure	0	0%
Not Participated	2	100%

* Former students could select up to two sites that applied.

Table 101

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Shadowing, from the 2010 cohort

Job Shadowing*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	1	33%
ResNet	0	0%
Unsure	1	33%
Not Participated	1	33%

* Former students could select up to two sites that applied.

Table 102

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Job Shadowing, from the 2011 cohort

Job Shadowing*	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Library	3	50%
ResNet	1	17%
Unsure	3	50%
Not Participated	0	0%

* Former students could select up to two sites that applied.

Paid Internships. The last phase of the C.I.T.Y. program, as envisioned by the Kingsbury Center, was paid summer internships on the GWU campus. During the pilot year, applying for the internships was voluntary. However, due to low student response, applying for the internships was required once students completed the first two parts of the program (e.g., job site visits and job shadowing). The 2009 cohort internships were voluntary, meaning that former students volunteered to apply for the internships.

Whereas those in the 2010 and 2011 cohorts were required to apply and interview for summer internships. Former students participating in the internships were paid at \$8.25 an hour. Former students worked 20 hours a week for five weeks during the summer. Every Friday, former students participated in a career-development workshop at the Kingsbury Center. All former students were matched to the internship based on their interests and the results of career-planning assessments.

Overall, the majority of former students (75%, n=9) who participated in the C.I.T.Y. program had a paid internship opportunity. The former students interned at the following GWU departments: bookstore (17%, n=2), General Counsel's Office (17%, n=2), library (17%, n=2), Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) (8%, n=1), and health and wellness (8%, n=1) (see Figure 28 and Table 103). A small number of former students (33%, n=4) said they did not participate in the paid internship opportunity. These former students only participated either in the job site visits and/or job shadowing. The 2009 cohort had a student (50%, n=1) who interned at the health and wellness center (See Table 104). The 2010 cohort had two students who interned at the General Counsel's Office (33%, n=1) and the bookstore (33%, n=1) (see Table 105). The 2011 cohort had five students who interned in the following departments: library (29%, n=2), General Counsel's Office (14%, n=1), bookstore (14%, n=1), and GSEHD (14%, n=1) (see Table 106).

Figure 28. C.I.T.Y. Internship Experienced by Cohorts

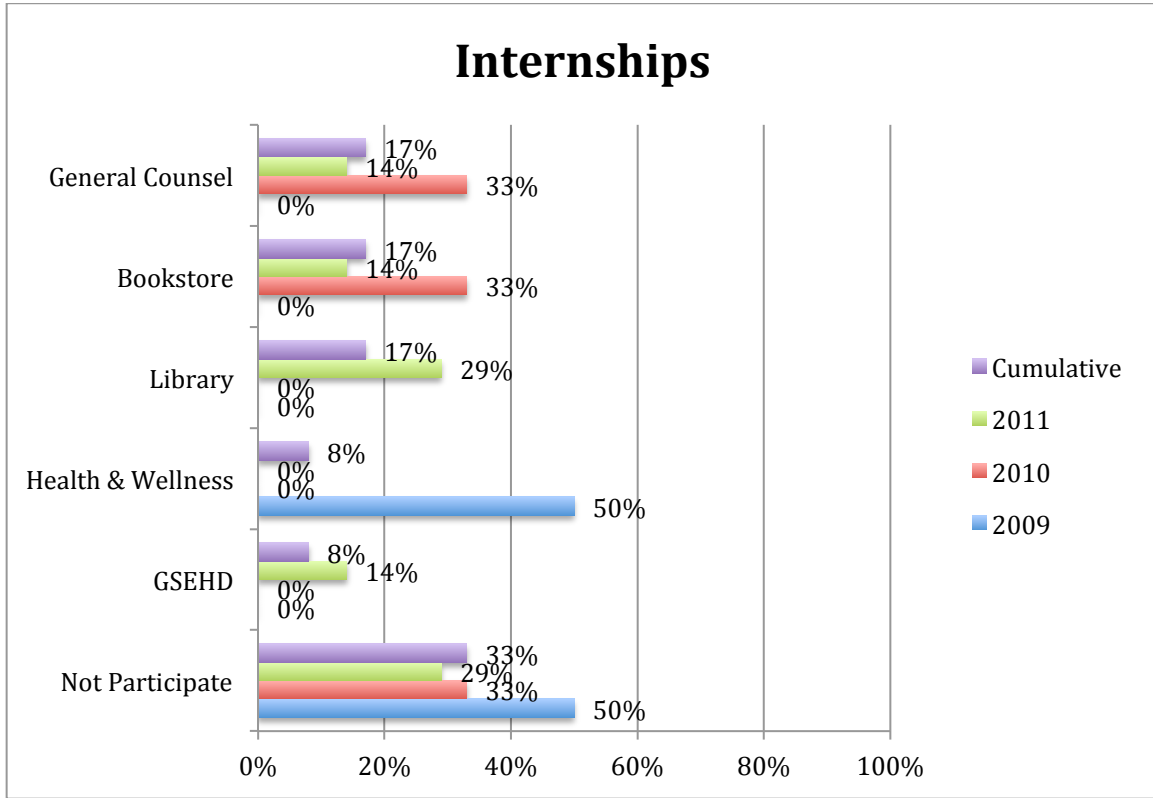


Table 103

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Internships, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Internships	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
General Counsel	2	17%
Bookstore	2	17%
Library	2	17%
Health & Wellness	1	8%
GSEHD	1	8%
Not Participate	4	33%
Total	12	100%

Table 104

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Internships, from the 2009 cohort

Internships	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
General Counsel	0	0%
Bookstore	0	0%
Library	0	0%
Health & Wellness	1	50%
GSEHD	0	0%
Not Participate	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 105

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Internships, from the 2010 cohort

Internships	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
General Counsel	1	33.33%
Bookstore	1	33.33%
Library	0	0%
Health & Wellness	0	0%
GSEHD	0	0%
Not Participate	1	33.33%
Total	3	100%

Table 106

Number of students reported on the C.I.T.Y. Internships, from the 2011 cohort

Internships	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
General Counsel	1	14%
Bookstore	1	14%
Library	2	29%
Health & Wellness	0	0%
GSEHD	1	14%
Not Participate	2	29%
Total	7	100%

Former students were asked to share both positive and negative responses about their internship experience. Ryan (2009) shared how the internship at the GWU Health and Wellness Center helped him understand the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities as well as the importance of customer service. He stated:

I worked at the equipment desk. It was like a simple task was when I was like being nice to customers, make sure everyone is satisfied and make sure there weren't like any more needs.

Michael (2010) had a different experience at the General Counsel's Office. He stated that he did not benefit from the internship. He found the tasks repetitive and that he had to be on task at all times. He shared a learning experience about workplace expectations, "I did learn that if you slack off and if you browse the Internet on a computer at work, there might be someone watching and they will report it to your boss." Jake (2010) enjoyed his experience at the bookstore. He shared how it was nice to have a paid internship opportunity in which he gained insight and advice about the college experience from other college students who worked there. In addition, he gained entry-level work skills. He highlighted his day-to-day tasks and responsibilities, "I learned how to manage apparel items, clothes, marketing, also getting a taste of what's it's like to be a cashier and work on the floor, assist customers, pretty basic entry-level stuff." Alicia (2011) and Mike (2011) both agreed that the internship experience assisted them in building their résumé. Rachel (2011) interned at the bookstore, and she commented on the importance of teamwork and communication. She stated, "I learned a lot about communication—to your boss, customers, and teammates." Darrow (2011) interned at GSEHD and learned such day-to-day office responsibilities as copying, filing, and faxing documentations. He highlighted the importance of maintaining confidentiality in the office. As part of his responsibility, he had to maintain confidential documents on student profiles. Sam interned at the library and realized the importance of staying focused and busy. He realized that some tasks would take longer than others. Mike (2011) relayed the

importance of having a mentor while completing his library internship. His mentor provided important advice, such as staying in school and acquiring new experiences to add to your résumé.

Summary

All former students participated in one or more career exploration activities in the C.I.T.Y. program. Former students participated in the following career exploration activities: job site visits (100%, n=12), job shadowing (33%, n=4), and paid internships (75%, n=9). The GWU departments the former students recalled visiting were the following: library (50%, n=6), bookstore (42%, n=5), health and wellness center (25%, n=3), ResNet/IT (25%, n=3), parking (17%, n=2), general counsel (17%, n=2), police (17%, n=2), Mt. Vernon campus (8%, n=1), radio (8%, n=1), theater (8%, n=1), fire department (8%, n=1), business (8%, n=1), and engineering (8%, n=1). Former students shared what they learned about the job site visits. They received an introduction into the world of employment by learning about job responsibilities, the importance of having prior job experience, focusing on having a career and not just a job, and having leadership skills. Former students who reported participating in the job shadowing activities went to these two GWU departments: library (36%, n=4) and ResNet/IT (9%, n=1). Former students, based on their experiences, gained a deeper insight into the day-to-day workplace responsibilities. In addition, a couple of students began thinking towards their future, such as ensuring that the work experience matched their interests and having a satisfying career.

Former students conducted their internships at the following departments on campus: bookstore (17%, n=2), general counsel (17%, n=2), library (17%, n=2), GSEHD

(8%, n=1), and health and wellness (8%, n=1). Former students shared positive and negative experiences about their internship. Overall, former students reported gaining such entry-level work skills as providing customer service, building teamwork, and delivering effective communication. A couple of students noted that the internship experience assisted them in building their résumé. A student shared his frustration with having workplace expectations (e.g., staying on task) and dealing with repetitive tasks. Overall, former students had positive feedback about their internship experiences.

Evaluation of C.I.T.Y. and KTP

Former students were requested to provide an evaluation on the C.I.T.Y. and KTP programs to determine if they benefited from them. In addition, former students were asked to share if the programs assisted them in identifying their postsecondary goals. Lastly, former students provided their own recommendations to assist current and future students in preparing for the transition from high school to employment and adult life.

Evaluation of C.I.T.Y. The C.I.T.Y. program offered career exploration experiences through job site visits, job shadowing activities, and internships. Former students were asked to share if they thought they benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program. Overall, former students (75%, n=9) reported that they did benefit from the C.I.T.Y. program (see Figure 29 and Table 107). A couple of former students (17%, n=2) stated that they were unsure if they benefited from it. A former student (8%, n=1) shared that he did not benefit from the C.I.T.Y. program. The 2009 cohort had one former student who benefited from participating in the C.I.T.Y. program (see Table 108). Ryan (2009) benefited from the program by, "...just contributing and helping out people." The 2010 cohort had two students who reported "yes" and "no" with regards to whether they

benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program (Table 109). Jake (2010) shared how he benefited from participating in the C.I.T.Y. program. The experience gave him an opportunity to go back to GWU for more work experience later in his college career. He stated:

...it got me in touch with GW. That also gave me a window to go at GW, which is what I did this summer when I went to go intern again (Department Project Management and Human Resources) for another job, but this time it was on my own and apart from Kingsbury—so it did have its benefits down the road for future reference.

As noted earlier, Michael (2010) shared that he did not benefit from his internship experience or from the C.I.T.Y. program. However, he shared that his internship position made him realize what he did not want as a job. He said, “The only thing I benefited from is that I never wanted to work in that again. I’ve had other internships, and they’ve been better. I just didn’t feel like I got much out of it except I think I was paid for it.”

The 2011 cohort (100%, n=7) reported that they benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program (see Table 110). Former students benefited in different ways. Alicia and Rachel benefited by being able to have references for their résumé. In addition, Alicia shared that her internship opportunity allowed her to assist with household bills. Rachel and Juan both agreed that the program allowed them to learn about different types of jobs as well as career choices. Mike shared that the program helped him become more open minded as well as more confident in handling social situations. In their own words, the following members of the 2011 cohort highlighted how the program benefited them.

Darrow: I benefited from this program on how to become a better businessman, how to mature in the workplace, how to act, how to behave as far as being in the workforce around your co-workers, the faculty.

Malik: It gave me like, courage to even do the work and also, as well as it prepared me for reality. After high school, it prepared me for my jobs that I did these past two years.

Sam: Volunteering at the place, at the Gelman Library, where I worked and did my internship at. It really helped me for the real world—it makes me be prepared.

Overall, the majority of former students (75%, n=9) benefited and had positive experiences in the C.I.T.Y. program in different areas from gaining confidence in the workplace to preparing for the real world (see Table 107). There was one former student (8%, n=1) who had a negative experience but recognized that it was a learning experience. There a couple of former students (17%, n=2) who shared that they were unsure if they benefited from participating in the C.I.T.Y. program.

Figure 29. Benefit from C.I.T.Y. Program by Cohorts

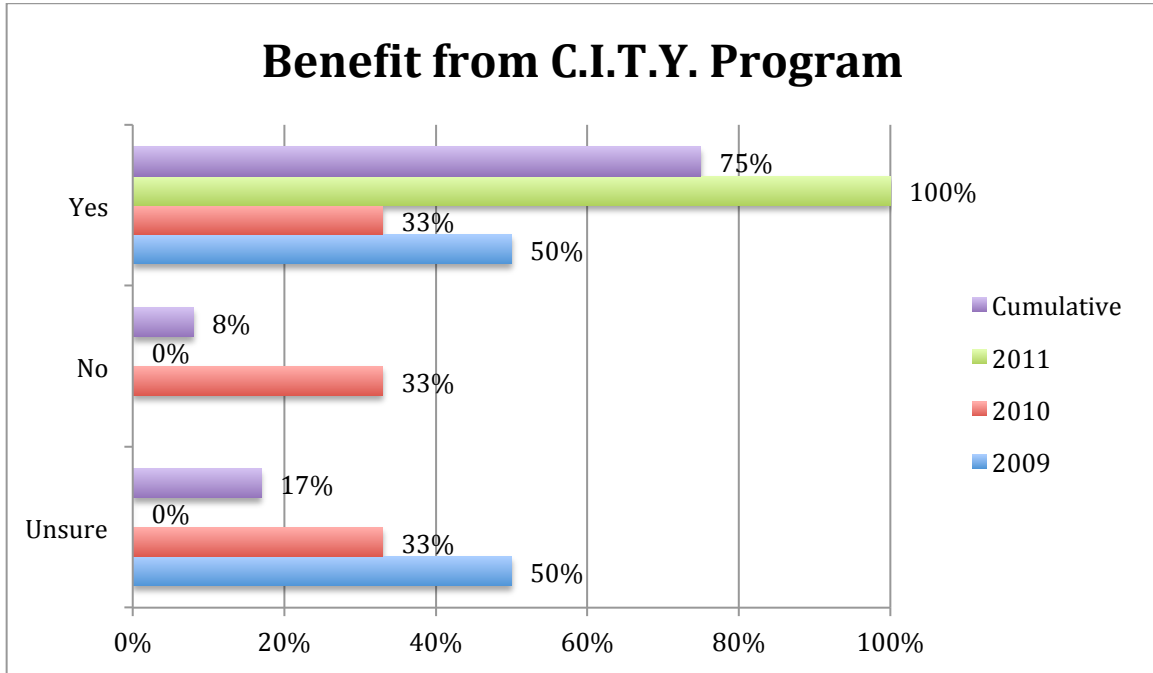


Table 107

Number of students on the benefits of the C.I.T.Y. program, from the 2009-2011 cohorts

Benefits from C.I.T.Y. Program	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	75%
No	1	8%
Unsure	2	17%
Total	12	100%

Table 108

Number of students on the benefits of the C.I.T.Y. program, from the 2009 cohort

Benefits from C.I.T.Y. Program	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	50%
No	0	0%
Unsure	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Table 109

Number of students on the benefits of the C.I.T.Y. program, from the 2010 cohort

Benefits from C.I.T.Y. Program	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	33.33%
No	1	33.33%
Unsure	1	33.33%
Total	3	100%

Table 110

Number of students on the benefits of the C.I.T.Y. program, from the 2011 cohort

Benefits from C.I.T.Y. Program	Number of Former Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%
Unsure	0	0%
Total	7	100%

Former students were asked if participating in C.I.T.Y. helped them identify their postsecondary goals. Overall, former students (75%, n=9) agreed that it did help. A few former students (25%, n=3) did not agree that it helped in identifying their postsecondary goals. The 2009 cohort was split in half—former students agreed (50%, n=1) and disagreed (50%, n=1)—as to whether the opportunities that C.I.T.Y. offered assisted them in identifying their postsecondary goals. The 2010 cohort (100%, n=3) identified that C.I.T.Y. assisted them in identifying their postsecondary goals. A couple of students added additional thoughts to their answer. Michael, as stated earlier, did not find the internship experience to be helpful. He shared that the program ultimately assisted him in planning his postsecondary goals:

Actually, it did in a way. Thinking back about it, I remember definitely the internship helped me kind of understand what I really did not want to do with my

life, which really actually was a better thing the more I think about it because I just kind of learned that kind of environment and work wasn't right for me.

Jake highlighted how instinctively he knew the program assisted him but had difficulty remembering how the program helped him identify his postsecondary goals:

I would say that it helped me but the means of how they helped me, I don't think I could remember, but the fact that I had goals, I think that was proof enough that they were a good help.

The 2011 cohort had a majority of former students (72%, n=5) who agreed that C.I.T.Y. helped them identify their postsecondary goals. A couple former students (29%, n=2) found that C.I.T.Y. program did not help them with identifying their postsecondary goals. Rachel commented that the program was fun but did not assist in identifying postsecondary goals.

Evaluation of KTP. The KTP consisted of the tiered transition courses (see Figure 1), including the C.I.T.Y. program. Former students were requested to share if they found the KTP helpful in working or reaching their postsecondary goals. The majority of former students (81%, n=13) found the KTP to be helpful in working or reaching their postsecondary goals. A couple of students (13%, n=2) did not find the program beneficial in reaching their goals. There was one student (6%, n=1) who was unsure if the program was helpful. The 2009 cohort (75%, n=3) reported that they found the program useful with one student being unsure. The 2010 cohort (100%, n=3) believed that KTP was helpful in working towards or reaching future goals. The 2011 cohort (78%, n=7) found the program to be helpful in working towards and reaching their future

goals. A couple of students (22%, n=2) did not find the program to be helpful towards their future endeavors.

Former students were followed up with a question asking how the program was or was not helpful as they worked towards or reaching their postsecondary goals. The 2009 cohort provided a variety of answers as to how the program best served them. Freddy⁸ shared that it enabled him to become a straightforward and better person. In addition, it taught him to carefully review his work on a daily basis. Adam conveyed how the program taught him to be self-sufficient by better understanding his learning style. He felt that he benefited from his type of learning style and that it enabled him to navigate society. Ryan shared how the program taught him how to plan ahead as well as set short- and long-term goals.

The 2010 cohort provided additional insight as to how the program served them. Miles, similar to other students, shared that it helped him to plan ahead. He provided additional insight about how the program helped him understand his skills and strengths. He shared the importance of matching the job site to his goals. Michael relayed the importance of understanding what it means to have LD. Knowing how to disclose his LD brought him confidence to interact with college faculty. He shared it would have been harder to disclose without the KTP. In addition, the classes helped him learn about the career process: how to find a job, résumé-building, and finding a postsecondary institution. Jake shared that the courses raised his awareness with regards to applying for college and employment. Although he stated that the program helped him, he did share a couple of concerns, including the mixed message he received on college as a

⁸ Freddy did not finish high school; he was included in the sample because his story is important.

postsecondary option. He stated that faculty was encouraging college while also stating that college was not for everybody. These comments made it tougher for him to make the decision about going to college. Plus, he was not aware of other postsecondary options. He did not think that he was fully informed about all of his options for postsecondary life. Due to that lack of awareness, he felt that college was his only option.

The 2011 cohort presented similar responses to the other cohorts. Rachel echoed her peers about how it was helpful in understanding the job process and that it assisted in building her résumé. She did report that she did not have a full-time job after high school. John appreciated the experience because it helped him with getting into college. He saw it as a step towards reaching his postsecondary goals. Juan stated that career exploration presented him with options for the future. Darrow appreciated how the courses encouraged further education. Malik relayed how the program assisted him in reaching personal and professional goals. At the time, he was worried that he would not graduate high school. He shared how the program, "...helped me reach my goals by being like, a better person and figuring out what I do when I graduate from high school." Sam and Mike agreed that the program assisted them with goal setting, career planning, and the college search. Mike added how the program prepared him for the real world.

As stated earlier, a couple of students did not think that the program was helpful in working towards or reaching their postsecondary goals. Sue (2011) discussed how she thought the program was more focused on career exploration activities (e.g., careers, jobs, and cover letters) instead of focusing on navigating college life. She shared that she had to learn about college life during her freshman year of college. Therefore, she believed she was not as prepared for college. She advised the program to focus on college

preparation as well as career preparation. Alicia (2011), similar to Sue, agreed that the program did not assist her in reaching her postsecondary goals. She agreed with Jake that the program did not provide her with an awareness of all the options and opportunities available after graduation.

Former Student Recommendations. The last interview question focused on recommendations by former students for the Kingsbury Center and future generations of students to improve the preparation for employment and adult life. The 2009 cohort advised the Kingsbury Center to continue the career exploration and internship experiences. Again, the 2009 cohort was not required to participate in the program. Freddy⁹ had a message for the current and future students. He encouraged students to listen to their teachers and be prepared for life after high school. He shared that from his own experience the world is a hard place, different from high school. Muslin believes in the C.I.T.Y. program even though she did not participate it because her family did not meet the financial requirements. She regrets that she did not participate and advised that the C.I.T.Y. program should be required for all current and future students. In addition, she brought up the importance of disclosure and accommodations in the college environment. Adam encouraged more trips to bigger colleges and universities. As a student, he thought that the trips all too often focused on smaller colleges that offered many of the same benefits as Kingsbury (e.g., smaller class size). He advised that bigger universities offer many of the same services for students with disabilities. Ryan discussed the importance of career exploration opportunities. He recommended offering internships in the summer as well as during senior year.

⁹ Freddy did not finish high school; he was included in the sample because his story is important.

The 2010 cohort encouraged featuring additional internship sites, more ambitious college programs, and more involvement in college-search process. Miles recommended adding internship sites at other universities or colleges. Michael highly urged the faculty at Kingsbury to encourage current and future students to apply to more ambitious college programs. As a student, he thought that faculty all too often encouraged students to apply to smaller colleges (e.g., Montgomery College). He thought the smaller colleges as good schools but as not the only option. In addition, he provided more feedback about the C.I.T.Y. program and the summer internships. Based on his experience, the internship felt more useful when he was in college than they did when he was in high school. His last recommendation, similar to Muslin, was to reinforce the topic of disclosure with current and future students. In addition, he pointed out the need for students to understand how to disclose their disability in a positive manner. Jake advised faculty to be more invested in their students' college-search process. In addition, similar to Michael, he recommended that faculty highlight more college options for students. He discussed the importance of teaching youth the benefits and differences between two-year and four-year colleges. He believed that he was rushed through the college-search process and had to make a quick decision.

The 2011 cohort provided an array of suggestions to improve the transition from high school to adult life. Sue reinforced her comments about preparing students for college as well as for careers. She suggested that Kingsbury provide a college-prep seminar for students interested in college. She relayed that academics were a high priority, but more attention needed to be focused on independent living skills (e.g., paying bills) and time management. Alicia conveyed the need for more real-world

experiences. She shared how most ninth and tenth graders are not as focused on transitioning from high school to adult life. She suggested more activities outside of school and less discussion in the classroom. Rachel shared how her good academic record at Kingsbury did not translate into good academic performance in college. As a result, she had to take several noncredit courses in order to get into the college credit courses. She recommended that faculty encourage current and future students to enroll in noncredit courses to build their reading, math, and writing skills. John encouraged faculty to sustain current programs. He believed that the programs were working for everyone. Juan recommended that Kingsbury create a department to teach trade classes. He encouraged faculty to highlight jobs in trade as an option after high school. Darrow echoed John's thoughts about continuing the programs for current and future students. In addition, he recommended the school continue providing services in tutoring after school. He encouraged faculty to listen to their students as well as encourage students to stay after school to get their homework done because it will benefit their future lives. Malik believed that students need to appreciate school. He advised faculty to make the career exploration and career curriculum more interesting. Sam recommended a SAT prep course or program for students to prepare for the college entrance exams. Mike, concurring with Alicia, shared the need for real-world application and programs for future and current students. In addition, Mike recommended faculty receive training to help prepare teachers to better assist students with transitioning from high school to adult life.

Summary

Former students provided their evaluation of the C.I.T.Y. and the KTP programs as well as offered recommendations for improving programs for current and future students. Overall, former students (75%, n=9) revealed that they benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program. Some former students (17%, n=2) were unsure if they benefited from it. There was a former student (8%, n=1) who said he did not benefit from the program. Former students shared how the program benefited them in their personal and professional lives. The program:

- expanded their awareness of different jobs and careers;
- provided references for résumé;
- prepared them for jobs after high school;
- prepared them for the real world;
- helped them learn appropriate behavior in the workplace;
- led to more work experience at GWU;
- helped them gain confidence in social situations;
- helped people; and
- helped them earn money to pay household bills.

There was a former student, Michael (2010), who said he did not benefit from the C.I.T.Y. program. He did acknowledge that the program showed him what he did not want as a career. The majority of former students (75%, n=9) found the C.I.T.Y. program assisted them in identifying their postsecondary goals. A few former students (25%, n=3) did not think C.I.T.Y. assisted them in identifying their postsecondary goals.

Overall, former students (81%, n=13) found the KTP to be helpful in working and reaching their postsecondary goals. A few former students (13%, n=2) thought that the KTP did not assist them in working and reaching their postsecondary goals. A student (6%, n=1) was unsure whether the program assisted in working and reaching postsecondary goals. Former students had the opportunity to share how the program was helpful to them in working towards and reaching their postsecondary goals. Former students recognized these key areas as being instrumental in that process.

- developing a greater understanding of themselves (e.g., learning style, strengths, and skills);
- learning about their disability and how to disclose LD;
- cultivating short- and long-term goals;
- matching postsecondary goals to career; and
- appreciating the career awareness and exploration process.

A couple of former students did not find the program to be helpful in working towards and reaching postsecondary goals. A former student expressed concern that there was more of a focus on careers rather than college preparation. Another former student thought that there was a lack of exposure to different postsecondary pathways. There was another former student who found the program to be helpful but agreed that there was a need for presenting more postsecondary options for students.

Lastly, former students provided recommendations to improve the transition from high school to adult life for current and future students at Kingsbury. Former students delivered specific recommendations in two areas: (a) KTP and C.I.T.Y. and (b) the

preparation for college and career. The first set of recommendations focused on improving the KTP and C.I.T.Y. programs and included the following recommendations:

- sustain and continue the transition courses and C.I.T.Y.;
- offer additional internship opportunities during the senior year;
- create internship opportunities at other universities;
- develop more engaging career exploration and curriculum; and
- maintain current tutoring services.

The second area of recommendations focused on how faculty can better prepare students for college and career. Former students provided the following recommendations:

- continue the discussions on disclosure and accommodations;
- create a seminar that focuses on college preparation and includes a focus on independent living skills;
- start and develop a trade department;
- encourage more ambitious college programs;
- expand college visits to include larger schools;
- discuss the differences between two-year and four-year college programs;
- offer college entrance exam preparation (e.g., SAT);
- promote college non-credit courses to help build math, writing, and reading skills;
- plan real-world experiences outside the classroom; and
- urge students to complete homework in school after school is over.

Former students provided specific recommendations in two areas to improve the transition from high school to employment and adult life.

Conclusion

The purpose of the follow-up study was to (a) report on postsecondary outcomes (e.g., education, employment, and independent living) of former high school students with LD, (b) gain insight on their levels of satisfaction, and (c) to receive feedback to determine if KTP and C.I.T.Y. assisted in helping high school students with disabilities in working towards postsecondary goals. In addition, another purpose was to determine how this group of former students aligned with Indicator 14 criteria since leaving high school. A total of 16 former students participated in phone interviews. The former students offered insight into their lives in the postsecondary environment. Collectively, the results indicated the following outcomes regarding the former Kingsbury students:

- 1) Former students are enrolled in two-year or four-year colleges or universities.
 - a. The majority (94%, n=15) has enrolled in an institution of higher education since leaving high school. There was only one student (6%, n=1) who had not enrolled in any type of training program, college, or university since leaving high school.
 - b. At the time of the interview, participants (75%, n=9) were working towards their degree at two- and four-year institutions. They anticipated graduating from their institution in 2014 or 2015.
 - c. There was only one student (6%, n=1) who had graduated from college.
 - d. The majority of former students (75%, n=9) utilized campus services and received accommodations from the DSS. A small percentage of former students (25%, n=3) decided not to request services or accommodations.

2) Former students are currently employed or have been previously employed.

Overall, the majority of former students (94%, n=15) have been employed since leaving or graduating high school. There was only one student (6%, n=1) who has not been employed since leaving high school.

Currently employed

- a. Over half of the former students (56%, n=9) are currently employed and working in some type of employment setting.
- b. The majority of currently enrolled students (78%, n=7) are gaining work experience while enrolled in a college or university.
- c. Most currently employed students were in some type of entry-level (78%, n=7) or semi-skilled position (22%, n=2).
- d. Former students reported receiving several employee benefits, including vacation time (33%, n=3), health insurance (33%, n=3), sick days/leave (33%, n=3), and retirement benefits (22%, n=2). Some former students (44%, n=4) reported not receiving any type of employee benefits.
- e. The majority of former students (89%, n=8) did not request or receive accommodations in the workplace. A former student (11%, n=1) requested accommodations.

Previously employed

- f. Former students who are not currently working and were previously employed (83%, n=5) are working towards their degree or have received their degree.

- g. The former students were evenly split between working in entry-level (50%, n=3) and semi-skilled (50%, n=3) positions.
 - h. Former students reported receiving employee benefits, including vacation time (17%, n=1), sick days/leave (50%, n=3), health insurance (17%, n=1), and retirement benefits (17%, n=1). A group of former students (50%, n=3) reported not receiving any type of employee benefits.
 - i. The majority of former students (83%, n=5) did not request or receive accommodations in the workplace. A former student (17%, n=1) requested accommodations.
- 3) Former students continue to live with their families and rely on public transportation.
- a. The majority of former students (56%, n=9) continue to live with their families. There are few students who live with roommates (25%, n=4), on a college campus (13%, n=2), or with a spouse (6%, n=1).
 - b. In thinking a year or two years ahead, former students anticipate continuing to live with their families (25%, n=4), to live alone (31%, n=5), to live with a roommate (13%, n=2), on a college campus (13%, n=2), with a spouse (13%, n=2), or other (6%, n=1).
 - c. Former students rely on public transit (88%, n=14) and family/friends (75%, n=12) to get their destination.
- 4) Former students are satisfied with their lives.
- a. Former students (75%, n=9) are satisfied with their institution of higher education.

- b. Of the nine former students who are currently working, 67% reported satisfaction with their current job and preferred not to work somewhere else.
 - c. Former students are satisfied with their current living arrangement. Students who live with their families appreciate the financial support but recognize the lack of privacy that comes with living at home. Students who live on and off campus enjoy their independence.
 - d. Former students (67%, n=6) who have received RSA services have found the services to be helpful in reaching their employment goals.
- 5) Former students benefited from KTP and C.I.T.Y. programs, which assisted them in working towards their postsecondary outcomes.
- a. Former students (75%, n=9) reported that they benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program and that it helped them identify their postsecondary goals. A small group of students (17%, n=2) were unsure if they benefited from the program. There was one student (8%, n=1) who reported not benefiting from it.
 - b. Participants shared such program benefits as expanding career awareness and preparing for the real world on personal and professional level.
 - c. The majority of former students (81%, n=13) found KTP helpful in working towards or reaching their postsecondary goals. A few students (13%, n=2) and one student who was unsure (6%, n=1) did not think the KTP program assisted them in reaching their postsecondary goals.

- d. Former students reported such KTP benefits as developing self-determination skills, disability awareness and disclosure, short- and long-term goals, and career exploration.

As shared in previously, according to IDEA 2004, Indicator 14, schools are required to follow up with students within a year after leaving high school. This study interviewed former students within three years (2011 cohort), four years (2010 cohort), and five years (2009 cohort) after leaving high school. The purpose of Indicator 14 is to determine the "...percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were:

- (1) Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school;
- (2) Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school; and
- (3) Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school.” (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(B))

Indicator 14 was applied to the former students' current status of three-to-five years post high school. Based on Indicator 14, the majority of former students (94%, n=15) met the first criteria of “enrolled in higher education.” There were no former students who met the “competitively employment” or “enrolled in other postsecondary education or training” criteria. A former student (6%, n=1) met the third criteria of “some other employment.” According to Indicator 14 guidelines, each student is to be counted in only one category. In the guidelines, it states, “If a leaver is enrolled in higher education and

competitively employed, count the leaver only in (a) higher education and (b) not competitively employed” (NPSO, 2010, p. 10).

Chapter Five: Interpretations, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The IDEA of 2004 and its Indicator 14 regulation requires states and localities to follow up with students with disabilities to determine how they are faring in postsecondary education/training or employment within one year of their leaving/graduating from high school. The Kingsbury Center developed with its partners (e.g., GWU and HSC Foundation) a comprehensive (9-12th grade) the Kingsbury Transition Program (KTP) that included the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) program in its effort to prepare youth with LD for transitioning from high school to the postsecondary environment.

The faculty and administration at the Kingsbury Center developed the transition program in response to feedback from former students who found the postsecondary environment of college or work to be a challenge. Secondly, researchers (Benz et al., 2000; Halpern et al., 1995; Repetto, Webb, Garvan, & Washington, 2002) had shown that students who were in a high school transition program were more likely to be employed or enrolled in higher education after leaving high school. Lastly, a limited number of studies focused on postsecondary outcomes for students with LD. A second area of need is research that addresses the transition services received by students with LD. This study addressed how former students who participated in KTP and/or C.I.T.Y. are faring in the postsecondary environment of education, employment, and independent living within three to five years from leaving/graduating from high school. Secondly, the study shared current levels of satisfaction experienced by former students in the postsecondary environment. Lastly, the study acquired feedback from former students about KTP and

C.I.T.Y. to determine if the programs assisted in helping them work towards their postsecondary goals. The results of the study reported that former students:

- are going to college and working part-time;
- are currently or have been employed;
- continue to live with their parents with a few students living on or off campus;
- are satisfied with their lives; and
- felt that the KTP/CITY Program helped them in working towards their postsecondary goals.

Conceptual Framework

As shared in Chapter 2, the career-development theory was developed by the earlier work by Parsons (1909), Ginzberg (1952), and Super (1990). Career development theory is fluid and based upon career-related experiences that build an individual's self-concept (Super, 1952). The young adults in this follow-up study began their career development in high school through the KTP and C.I.T.Y. programs. Their career development continues in the postsecondary environment. Sitlington and colleagues (2007) provided a career-development model that focused on these four phases of career development: awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation.

The KTP and C.I.T.Y. program applied the model developed by Sitlington and colleagues (2007):

- Career awareness, as defined by Sitlington and colleagues, is a time for youth with disabilities to "...discover the existence of work, jobs, various careers as well as college and other postsecondary education options, and participating in community and leisure activities" (p. 14).

- Career exploration is the second phase of career development that requires youth with disabilities to engage “...physically, emotionally, and behaviorally as much as possible with various aspects of work in different occupations or careers” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 15).
- Career preparation is the time for youth with disabilities to begin “...acquiring career and vocationally related knowledge and skills” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 18).
- Career assimilation is designed for youth with disabilities to have the opportunity to “...blend into the workforce as a team player who self-initiate and who can move easily between positions or workplaces, both laterally and vertically” (Sitlington et al., 2007, p. 20).

The KTP and C.I.T.Y. programs provided former students with career awareness (e.g., career exploration course and job site visits), career exploration (e.g., integrated career skills course and job shadowing), career preparation (e.g., internship), and career assimilation (e.g., internship). Therefore, the interview protocol had specific questions based on the former students’ experience in the KTP and C.I.T.Y. program. Based on the results of the interviews, these young adults are still pursuing their career goals by attending college or working for an employer. In the postsecondary environment, they are still gaining career exploration (e.g., college internships) and career-preparation experience (e.g., college internships/work). They are all striving for career assimilation in their chosen career or field. In the area of independent living, the interview protocol included questions that related to Halpern’s quality-of-life framework that focused on personal satisfaction (1993).

Interpretations

Overall, the results provided positive indication that former students are making headway towards reaching their postsecondary goals. Again, there were 16 former students from three cohorts (e.g., 2009, 2010, 2011) who participated in the post-school interviews. However, in evaluating and reviewing interview responses, there were some areas of concern: transition program issues, overemphasis on the college pathway, length of time to obtain a postsecondary degree, LD disclosure, adult services, and employee benefits. In addition, a comparison analysis between the NLTS-2 (Newman et. al., 2011) and the data collected in this study revealed interesting correlations in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

KTP/C.I.T.Y. Program Issues

The C.I.T.Y. program was part of the KTP that provided former students with the opportunity to undergo career exploration opportunities that included job site visits, job shadowing, and paid summer internship on the GWU campus. Again, as mentioned in Chapter 4, of the 16 former students who participated in the follow-up interview, only 12 former students were also part of the C.I.T.Y. program. However, all 16 students had enrolled in one or more of the transition courses within the KTP. A few program issues were identified through the interview process. They are: (a) former students did not remember the C.I.T.Y. job-shadowing experience, (b) former students did not acknowledge the C.I.T.Y. experience as a “paid work” experience, and (c) the results of the 2009 cohort.

Overall, former students remembered the job site visits and internship opportunities associated with the C.I.T.Y. program. They (58%, n=12) had difficulty

remembering their job-shadowing opportunities. The researcher knew if former students shared that they had participated in an internship, they had also participated in C.I.T.Y.'s job site visits and job shadowing. However, the researcher did not correct the student responses even though the researcher knew the responses were incorrect thus allowing the data to truly represent the student's reflection. Each component of the program was done in sequential order. Former students were placed in their internship opportunity based on assessment from the job site visits and job shadowing experiences as well as from the results of their transition or career assessments.

Former students were requested to share if they had work or training experiences while in high school. Students could report if they had volunteer, service-learning, paid work, and/or internship experiences. Some former students (33%) did not recognize their C.I.T.Y. internship as a "paid work" experience. A couple of the former students (17%) also did not recognize the C.I.T.Y. internship as an "internship" experience.

The 2009 cohort results could be influenced by the fact it was a pilot year for the C.I.T.Y. program. The 2009 cohort is currently working towards their postsecondary goals. A concern with this cohort is that they are spending a long time at college and require more services/accommodations on campus than the other two cohorts (see Figure 15 and 16). There is only one former student who has graduated from a four-year college from this cohort. There are two other students who are still working towards their degree at their respective two- and four-year institutions. Ryan is working towards his Associate's degree in Graphic Design and has enrolled for more than four semesters. Adam is a 5th-year senior at a four-year institution working towards his English Communications degree. The students required such services as notetaker, writing/math

center, and tutoring. In addition, they required such accommodations as recording lectures, extra time on tests/assignments, and the use of assistive technology. As stated earlier, when compared to other cohorts, they are taking longer to complete their degree and requiring a full set of services/accommodations.

In addition, the 2009 cohort's employment percentage (see Figure 17) was significantly lower when compared to the other cohorts (e.g., 2010 and 2011) even though the majority of the cohort has worked since high school. This is due to Ryan being the only former student who has not worked since leaving high school. As stated earlier, he is working towards his Associate's degree and chooses not to work while obtaining his degree. Muslin worked as a volunteer in different jobs and gained employment skills in those areas. She had just graduated from college and was not working at the time of interview but planned to look for employment in January 2014. Freddy¹⁰ and Adam were the only two former students who were currently employed at the time of the interview. Freddy decided not to enroll in college and went straight into the workforce in a job with his uncle's business. He only works seven to eight hours a week. As stated earlier, Adam is enrolled in a four-year college and works part-time. He also works 24-25 hours a week at a Sear's Outlet.

Recommendations. To address the issues of the KTP/C.I.T.Y. program, a few recommendations are suggested to faculty and staff to assist future cohorts as well as to help improve the transition program. The first recommendation is to conduct an exit interview with seniors about the KTP/C.I.T.Y. program as well as to review their postsecondary goals in their IEP. Next, the school conducts a follow-along study with

¹⁰ Freddy did not finish high school; he was included in the sample because his story was important.

future cohorts at the two-, six-, and 10-year mark. At the two-year mark, students will have completed their freshman year of college. At the six-year mark, students will either have completed their degree or be nearing completion of the degree. At the 10-year mark, students will have been in the workforce for a few years post-college. Follow ups at these specific points will address the memory issues faced by this group of former students and will help in retaining the students' short and long-term reflections on the transition program. At the exit interview, student memories might be stronger and sharper on the specific aspects of the career-exploration activities (e.g., job site visits, job shadowing, and summer internships) of the C.I.T.Y. and Kingsbury programs. The interview protocol (see Appendix E) can be revised to conduct a follow-along study. For this study, the interview protocol has been validated by experts and practitioners and can assist Kingsbury in meeting compliance issues related to Indicator 14. To do this well and effectively, schools have to secure funding to collect the follow-along data and analyze it in their efforts to continue and to improve the transition programs.

In addition, a second recommendation is to encourage faculty and staff when discussing the C.I.T.Y. program to call it is an “internship” and a “paid work” experience. All students should be able to acknowledge and reflect that they are completing an internship and getting paid for it at the same time. If LEA/SEA decides to implement a transition program, be prepared for the pilot year cohort to yield post-school outcome data that might not be as strong as later cohorts. Again, the importance of following up at critical points and obtaining feedback can make the transition program stronger and more responsive to future cohorts' needs and preferences.

College-Going Culture

There appears to be the perception in society and in schools that college is the only pathway for students, including students with disabilities. There is also a perception that former students received mixed messages from faculty and staff about college. Some students relayed that they felt that the college pathway was the only one being offered and that they would have appreciated learning or knowing about other pathways. Some other students perceived that only some colleges were mentioned as “acceptable” for them to apply to during their senior year. When former students were asked to reflect on the goals they set for themselves upon leaving high school, nearly every single student listed going to college as a postsecondary goal. There was not a single student who had in mind a different postsecondary education pathway, such as a career-technical or trade school.

Former students shared that they received mixed messages about college and even expressed concern as to how college options were presented to the students. Adam (2009) is a 5th year senior at a four-year college pursuing his bachelor's degree in English communications. He suggested to faculty at Kingsbury to be more open to taking students on field trips to larger schools. He felt the smaller college environment was promoted more than the larger school environment. He shares his thoughts on visiting larger schools:

And I feel like if we travel to a big time university such as St. John's or Syracuse or U Penn, Penn State, I feel like they could actually see the bigger side of college and to really understand that if they want to consider that as a choice then it's

there for them...and their big time schools also have the same kind of services, the same kind of plans that a small time institution would have...

Michael (2010), along with Adam, had the same perception that certain schools were being highlighted over other schools. He currently is working towards his bachelor's degree in communications at a four-year college. He encourages faculty to think beyond sending students to Montgomery College:

To have some students try and be more ambitious with the schools they're applying to. I feel like a lot of times that the schools that are being sold or recommended—those students are being undersold schools. I feel like some students could do a lot better. Probably separate a lot from Montgomery College. It's a great college. I know people who go there, but it shouldn't be the only solution for students. It feels like it's the only option some kids have.

Jake (2010), as mentioned in Chapter 4, felt unsure what college to apply to during his senior year. He ultimately decided to enroll in Montgomery College, a two-year college, to figure out what he wanted to do with his life. He shared how he received mixed messages about college in his senior seminar course:

One thing I did find a little bit troublesome is that like I personally felt like I kept getting thrown in my face that, “ok, college isn't for everybody.” If you want to go to college you can. If you don't—I mean you can if you want to. If you want to you can. If you don't want to you don't have to. But at the same time it made me more confused because then I was more drawing a blank of what I was supposed to do when I leave here because I don't want to really give the name of the person but it was kind of devaluing the notion of college while giving it value at the same

time. And even though this person mentioned that college is at times expensive then I didn't know how I was supposed to really figure out like what is and what am I supposed to do right after. It wasn't until later that I actually really found what I was interested in doing. So senior seminar was helpful in learning a bit more about the application process, but I didn't feel that I got all the help that I could with really being engaged with and trying to figure out what my interests were and what I could do after college. It was more like, "Hey. Do you want to go to college or do you not want to go college?" And that's a big decision to push someone to make on their own, but because they don't want to feel singled out they would just say, "Hey. Okay. Sure. I guess I'll go to college 'cause I don't know what other options I have."

Jake encouraged faculty to be more involved with their students and learn about their interests as well as their future plans. Hopefully, students will enroll in schools tailored to their interests. He shared his thoughts:

The first thing—to be more involved in the students...to engage them more of what their interests are and what they look forward to outside of school. Ask questions, "Are you interested in working, going to school?" "Where would you like to work?" "What school has your interest?" "Why that one?" "What makes you want to work here?" I felt in my last semester it was too rushed—I didn't understand what to do, and I was drawing a blank the entire time. Give more options, in regards to Montgomery College and community college. If they want to go to a two-year, explain the benefits of doing that whether it's you're not really sure what you want to do so you can go here and start out, then go to a four-

year school and make it so they have more options to choose from and to be more one-on-one personally involved rather than just saying, “Here. You've got this, this, and this. Ok. You choose.”

Recommendations. The access and opportunities to enroll in two- and four-year colleges is opening up for all high school students, including students with disabilities. Students can receive federal loans to support them financially at two- and four-year colleges. In a speech at Pellissippi State Community College in Knoxville, Tenn., on January 9, 2015, President Obama put forth a proposal to make community college free to every student in the United States. If his proposal receives the support of the U.S. Congress, access and opportunity to attend community colleges will never be higher in this country. For this group of students, the concern lies in having college as the only option as a postsecondary pathway. In addition, even if college is an option a student wants to consider, the perception by classmates is that only certain colleges are an acceptable pathway for students with disabilities.

As stated earlier, a couple of former students would have appreciated having a broader offering of postsecondary pathways other than college. A couple of former students had the opportunity to make suggestions for the Kingsbury Center. In thinking towards the future, the former student Juan encouraged the Kingsbury Center to develop and create a “...trade department and teach trade classes.” He believes that learning a trade is “a job...that you can always rely on.” Plus, another student, Alicia, in reflecting on the KTP, stated that it would have been helpful to know “...all of my options and opportunities” for life after high school. A few recommendations for individuals who work with transition-aged youth considering postsecondary education:

- A student’s postsecondary plans should be aligned to their interests, preferences, and skills—even if that means exploring other types of avenues, such as a career technical education or a trade school.
- An honest discussion with administrators, educators, families, and youth about the viability of college. The perception seems to be that everyone has to go to college. However, is going to college in the best interest of the student based on his or her interests and the time and financial commitment required to do? A way to embrace all types of pathways is to invite individuals who have taken a career technical or trade school route to share their knowledge about being a part of the workforce on career day.
- A former student recommended an opportunity to, “...have different programs to help the teachers prep the students into the real world.” Professional development opportunities would help teachers understand the different types of careers and the different postsecondary pathways students can take to find their place in the world.

Length of Time to Obtain Degree

As shared in Chapter 4, former students are continuing to work towards their two-year (25%, n=4) and four-year (50%, n=8) degrees (see Figure 14). Again, as shared in Chapter 4, most former students (75%, n=9) have requested some type of support services/accommodations from DSS. Former students (50%, n=2) from the 2009 cohort are currently enrolled in two- and four-year colleges up to six years since high school graduation (see Figure 13). They, over the other cohorts, currently receive full supports of

services and accommodations from their respective schools. All former students (100%, n=3) from the 2010 are currently enrolled at four-year institutions up to five years since high school graduation. The majority of former students (75%, n=7) from the 2011 cohort are enrolled at two- and four-year institutions up to four years since high school graduation. Based on this data, the concern is the length of time required for students to complete their degrees.

Today more and more full-time students are taking on average of six years to complete their degree at a four-year school (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). However, some of this group of former students interviewed have been continuously enrolled in community college for the past four-to-six years. In addition, former students are enrolled in four-year colleges for five to six years. The concern is how the length of enrollment impacts former students and their families. Former students and families could be making personal and financial sacrifices. From a financial standpoint, a slight majority of former students (56%, n=9) continue to live with their families (see Figure 21). For this group, students are continuing to live with their parents while completing their postsecondary education coursework. A former student brought up a concern with regards to the time spent taking remedial classes. Rachel (2011) is enrolled part-time in a two-year college in general studies working towards her Associate's degree. She is dissatisfied with her postsecondary institution. She expressed her frustration with having to take remedial classes:

So I would like work on reading and math because I got into the lowest level in math, and I was kind of upset. But you know, that's life. But those skills, like math and reading skills. And writing skills, too. You transfer...those skills either

for work or jobs. Not—I mean not for jobs, for school. So for it would be cause your need to get into like higher-level classes. I mean I did well at Kingsbury there, but it wasn't up to the level of college.

She voiced a concern that happens with many students when they go to college. They make good grades in high school but struggle to keep up with their college studies. The longer students are enrolled in college and do not finish their coursework has consequences that impact them and their families. In addition, it will take them longer to enter the workforce and develop a stable and productive career. The unintended consequence is that it will take them longer to create a financial portfolio and become financially independent, build credit, pay off student loan debt, and buy a home.

Recommendations. The following questions that we must ask ourselves reflect back to the larger discussion about society's college-going culture: How do we support students and provide them with realistic expectations about college? Society is built upon supporting all of youth in achieving their dreams. However, do all youth need to go to college for years longer than average student to achieve their dreams? Are there other postsecondary pathways worth exploring that can help youth meet the same objective without draining their finances and allow them to enter the workforce earlier?

The recommendations made in the college-going culture section would apply with regards to the length of time it takes to obtain a degree. It is important for educators to assist students and their families to be placed in postsecondary settings that set them up for success. Again, students should be connected to adult agencies and services that will help them reach their goals, based on their interests and preferences. Educators and administrators need to have partnerships within the workforce as well as be aware of

employment trends and the kinds of skills being sought by employers. This would require schools to think creatively about how to partner with employers to be more involved in middle and high school. Honest conversations about college and the length of time to complete a degree should be discussed between youth, families, and educators at the high school level. Educators need to think carefully about how to conduct these conversations with youth with disabilities and their families. The point is to recognize that students with disabilities might take longer than two or four years to complete a degree. There might be other postsecondary options for youth with disabilities and their families to take into consideration that may fulfill their goals but take less time and money. The longer it takes for students to enter the workforce results in unintended consequences for students and their families. In addition, from a policy perspective, it would be helpful to conduct follow-up studies with individuals with and without disabilities to determine trends in the length of enrollment needed to earn a college degree. The essential question is—Is the time it takes to earn a degree a trend specific for young adults with disabilities or for all young adults?

Disclosure

Students with disabilities need to understand their disability and how it might impact their ability to perform in the classroom. One of the biggest differences between high school and the postsecondary environment is how the law changes as a student transitions from high school to the postsecondary environment (e.g., employment and college). In high school, students are entitled to services under IDEA 2004. In the postsecondary environment, students are eligible for services through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) and the American with

Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). Therefore, college students have to disclose their disability to the campus DSS to determine if they are eligible to receive services or accommodations in the classroom. New employees who need workplace accommodations will need to disclose their disability to their employer.

The majority of former students chose to disclose at their postsecondary institution but not at their place of employment. As shared in Chapter 4, most former students (75%, n=9) who attended an institution of higher education requested some type of support services/accommodations from DSS or from the Counseling Center. Former students who were currently employed (88%, n=8) or previously employed (83%, n=5) did not request accommodations in the workplace. Several students did remark that they felt they could meet job requirements and expectations without accommodations. It appears that the participants were more aware of the accommodations and services available in the educational setting than in the place of employment. Former currently employed (11%, n=1) and previously employed (17%, n=1) students stated they currently received accommodations but could not remember what type of accommodations or services they received in the workplace. A couple of students had made wrong assumption about the disclosure process in the postsecondary settings. Malik (2011) was under the impression that accommodations were only available in postsecondary education settings. Darrow (2011) believed the employer had to approach him in the workplace in order to receive accommodations.

Recommendations. A couple of questions are raised based on the data: (a) Why are students disclosing at college but not work? and (b) Why are students able to remember their accommodations at college but not at work? It is interesting to note the

tendency towards the need for the lack of accommodations in the workplace, given the earlier discussion about the length of time it takes students to finish college with all the accommodations and services. The assumption is that students would need just as many supports in the workplace as well as the classroom. A recommendation for LEAs is to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators on the topic of disclosure from the ADA. It is critical for teacher and administrators to explain to students the connection between accommodations in school and the relationship to accommodation in the workplace. A second recommendation for educators and families is to continue to have discussions on the topic of disclosure, either one on one with the student or in a classroom setting. There are resources that families and educators can use to begin the discussion on disclosure, such as *The 411 on Disability Disclosure Workbook* by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability). A former student, Michael (2010), reiterated the importance of the discussion on disclosure in high school:

And I think the biggest thing is to continue having people understand exactly what their disability is so they can kind of understand what to talk about—how to talk about it so they don't just say things...Rather than a student saying, "Oh I'm stupid." They'll say, "My disability," which is completely different.

In addition, in a transition community that includes researchers, there should be an inquiry as to why students choose to disclose their disability at college instead of at work. The majority of former students are working in entry-level positions while enrolled in college. A question is raised as to whether students are more easily able to self-accommodate at work than at school or find jobs that align with their strengths. In

addition, the process to disclose might not be as clear to those in the employment setting as it is to students in the postsecondary education setting. Nevertheless, it raises the question if this is a trend of disclosing at school instead of work that is specific to students with LD or does it apply to all students with disabilities. There is a need for research that delves into disclosure in the workplace and in higher education. Teachers, families, and employers could benefit from understanding how disclosure can better serve transitioning youth.

Adult Services

As shared in Chapter 4, former students were requested to share their connections to adult services while in high school (e.g., specifically RSA) and in the postsecondary environment (e.g., RSA, housing, mental health). As stated in Chapter 4, the majority of former students (69%, n=11) did meet with a VR counselor in high school. However, a concern is that a couple of students were unsure (13%, n=2) if they met with a VR counselor in high school. These former students continued not to receive RSA services in their current environment. One of the former students, Malik, voluntarily shared how he thought the reason he did not receive services was because his parents did not submit the correct paperwork. In addition, a few former students reported (19%, n=3) that they did not meet with a VR counselor while in high school. Fortunately, each of the students ended up receiving services from RSA after high school. If these former students had not received RSA services, the percentage of those not receiving services would currently be higher, at around 32%. The connection to adult services is critical to ensure that students receive the necessary supports to be successful in reaching their postsecondary goals. The majority of former students who received services from RSA received some type of

financial assistance (e.g., tuition, books, or AT devices). Malik could be receiving some type of financial assistance while he is working towards his bachelor's degree in graphic design at University of the District of Columbia.

Recommendations. It is critical that students with disabilities understand and be prepared to navigate the adult services system. As each former student was interviewed, an explanation was often given to explain the adult service provider (e.g., RSA) and the different services that might be provided by each service provider. It is important that high school students who will become young adults understand how adult service providers can assist them in the postsecondary environment. A great way to start the conversation is by inviting potential adult service providers to a student's transition IEP meeting. In addition, adult service providers could be guest speakers in a high school transition course to highlight services that are offered to young adults with disabilities. It is also important for parents and families to understand adult service providers to initiate linkage while students are enrolled in high school. Ultimately, these young adults will have to advocate their needs and disclose their disability to obtain services.

Employee Benefits

A little over half of the former students (56%, n=9) are currently employed. Of those currently employed, the majority of former students (78%, n=7) are working in entry-level positions. A little over half of the former students (56%, n=5) work less than 20 hours per week. Upon reflection, with former students working in entry-level part-time positions, several of them shared that they received employee benefits, such as vacation time (33%, n=3), health (33%, n=3), sick days/leave (33%, n=3), and retirement (22%, n=2). Most employers do not provide any type of employee benefits, such as

vacation time with pay to those working less than 20 hours per week. These former students are under the impression that they do receive some or all of these employee benefits. In addition, there was a former student (11%, n=1) who is currently employed but completely unaware of any type of benefits offered in the workplace.

Recommendations. Again, similar to navigating the adult service system, a young adult's ability to understand and navigate how the workplace functions is important. There is a need to better understand how benefits are provided to part- and full-time employees. Depending on the benefit a student needs, there might be several different options or pathways to consider. For example, a student may need health insurance while enrolled in college. If the student's parents have health insurance, then the student can receive coverage until he or she is 26 years old under the Affordable Care Act. However, if a student needs to get health insurance on their own, he or she will need to be aware of their options (e.g., student health insurance or employer health insurance). Students need to know that working part-time while enrolled in college may not get them the health insurance required by the Affordable Care Act. A student may need to work full-time to receive the health plan required while enrolled in college part-time. In other words, students need to be aware of all of their options to come up with the best plan that works for them. Therefore, educators need to teach high school students about how employee benefits can provide for them in the future. This discussion about employee benefits would dovetail nicely into a transition course that focuses on transitioning into the workplace.

Comparative Data

The results of this follow-up study share similarities and differences with the findings of the literature review in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Former students (94%, n=15) have, at some point, enrolled in an institution of higher education. In comparison, the NLTS-2 indicated that students with learning disabilities (68%) enrolled at some point since high school (Newman et al., 2011). Similar to the literature, former students (75%, n=12) reported high numbers of current enrollment in postsecondary education institutions. There was a difference in this study from the literature in that these former students are currently enrolled in four-year institutions (50%, n=8) followed by two-year institutions (25%, n=4), with no students enrolled in any type of career/technical schools. The literature indicated that students with LD enrolled at two-year institutions followed by career technical, with the smallest number enrolled in four-year institutions (Murray et. al., 2000; Newman et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2011; Steele et al., 2005). Seo and colleagues (2008) found that degree completion for students with LD (at age 24) was slightly higher at two-year institutions than at four-year and career/technical institutions. At the time of the interview, there was only one former student (6%, n=1) who had graduated from a four-year institution. Although there were three students (19%, n=3) who had initially began their postsecondary education career at a two-year institution, those students are currently enrolled in a four-year institution (see Figure 12).

In the area of employment, slightly over half of the former students (56%, n=9) are currently employed. In comparison to the NLTS-2, individuals with learning disabilities are employed at 67% (Newman et al., 2011). The majority of former students

currently employed reported working part-time (56%, n=5), followed by full-time (33%, n=3). A couple of studies indicated that more young adults with LD were working in full-time positions than part-time positions after high school (Curtis et al., 2008; Steele et al., 2005). As far as accommodations, there were only two former students currently employed (11%, n=1) and previously employed (17%, n=1) who requested accommodations on the job. Both students could not remember the accommodation they had received in the workplace. The NLTS-2 study was the only study that gathered data on accommodations in the workplace (Newman et al., 2010). A small group of young adults with LD (16%) disclosed their disability to their employer, with only 1% of young adults with LD who reported receiving accommodations in the workplace (Newman et al., 2010).

Former students (44%, n=7) currently live independently of their families either on a college campus or with roommates or a spouse. This statistic is lower compared to the NLTS-2 where the majority of students with LD (65%) live independently (Newman et al., 2011). Former students (100%, N=16) reported being satisfied and very satisfied with their lives right now. A couple of studies indicated similar findings in that young adults with LD were highly satisfied with their lives as it relates to living arrangements and community/social life (Curtis et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2009). The results of this follow-up study on former students with LD supports the results of the Newman and colleagues' studies. Overall, this follow-up study adds to the growing body of literature on post-school outcomes of young adults with LD in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study. The first limitation of the study is the study had a 29% response rate. The aim was to get a 50% response rate to ensure that the answers were representative of this group of students. As noted in Chapter 4, a total of 16 out of 56 students participated in interviews with the researcher. As a result, the data may not be representative of this particular group. The second limitation is that prior to this study the survey protocol had not been tested for validity or reliability (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012). Before the student interviews, three expert panels reviews and a pilot test of the survey protocol was conducted to address the validity of the instrument (see Chapter 3). This provided an opportunity for the researcher to evaluate and improve the instrument before conducting interviews. An assumption made in the study was that all the former students who participated in the interview answered each question honestly. In addition, a third limitation to the study is that the answers are based on how former students interpreted their memories. For some students participating in the interview, it had been five years since they were a part of the KTP and six years since participating in the C.I.T.Y program. It might be more difficult to recall or remember parts of the transition program. The fourth limitation is that the population is small and specific, which can limit the generalizability of the study. This population is a small group of students with learning disabilities at private school that had a tiered transition program. Therefore, the results or the interpretation of the results may not apply to all students with learning disabilities. The last limitation of the study is that it did not include a group of students without disabilities with which to compare results.

Therefore, it is more difficult to measure how this group of former students would compare to their peers without disabilities.

Additional Recommendations. The findings, based on results and areas of concern, indicated the following conclusions and recommendations:

- 1) Transition programs that deliver services in high school indicate that they assist students with LD. Overall, former students had positive feedback regarding KTP/C.I.T.Y. programs and thought that it helped them work toward their postsecondary goals. A recommendation is to find opportunities for having a transition program that can assist students in working towards their future goals.
- 2) There is a need for re-evaluating a perception that all students will go to college. Some former students felt that there was only one pathway—go to college. There is a need for providing and highlighting the different postsecondary pathways, including trade and career technical education. A recommendation is to have honest conversations with administrators, educators, families, and students about what pathways available in the postsecondary environment, based on student interest and preferences.
- 3) There is a need to consider reassessing the Indicator 14 formula. Vitelli (2013) recommends extending and broadening Indicator 14 to account for the differences in the neurological, behavioral, and functional development between transitioning youth and adults. In addition, he recommends tracking students beyond the one-year requirement as well as take into account independent living outcomes (e.g., marriage and children). As stated in

Chapter 4, the majority of former students (94%) met the first criteria “enrolled in higher education.” The ultimate goal for transitioning from high school to postsecondary life is for all students to become gainfully employed. The indicator dismisses any type of work experience or skills the student might acquire while enrolled in college. The indicator provides other categories such as “competitive employment” or “some other employment.” A single student, Freddy¹¹ (2009), (6%) met the category of “some other employment.” According to the guidelines, each student who is followed up can only be counted in one category. If a student is enrolled in higher education and competitively employed, the student is placed in the highest category (NPSO, 2010). The highest category is “enrolled in higher education” (NPSO, 2010, p. 10). In addition, Indicator 14 does not take into account independent living. SEAs and LEAs are not required to follow up on students to determine if they are living independently.

Conclusion

The transition to adulthood for any young adult is filled with mountains and valleys, with possible detours along the way, in the pursuit of postsecondary goals. As shared in Chapter 1, the transition to adulthood for young adults is, “...drawn out over a span of nearly a decade and consists of a series of smaller steps rather than a single swift and coordinated one” (Berlin, et al., 2010, p. 4). In an opinion poll, Americans (95%, n=1400) shared the following indicators, as examples of achieving adulthood,

¹¹ Freddy did not finish high school; he was included in the sample because his story is important.

“...completing school, establishing an independent household, and being employed full-time” (General Social Surveys, 2002; Settersten & Ray, 2010, p. 22). The IDEA 2004, through Indicator 14, requires states to determine if young adults with disabilities are attending postsecondary education institutions and/or securing employment within a year of leaving high school. The outcomes reported through Indicator 14 are very similar to what Americans think of as “indicators” of adulthood. However, young adults with disabilities continue to face barriers in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living. For example, the labor force participation of people with disabilities (19.8%) is significantly lower when compared to people without disabilities (68.2%) (ODEP, 2015).

Young adults with LD (63%), from 2003 to 2012 years, graduated from high school with a regular diploma (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). There are a limited number of studies that track young adults with LD upon leaving high school to determine how they are faring in the postsecondary environment. In 2010, Chancellor Michelle Rhee led a forum that addressed the issues that affected students with disabilities who attended non public schools. The issue on transitioning youth in DC was a major issue in several key areas: (1) DCPS students do not have transition plans, (2) lack of communication between high schools and postsecondary institutions in the region, and (3) lack of coordination or collaboration between DCPS and Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) (DCPS, 2010). The Kingsbury Center, a private school, in the District of Columbia sought to learn how former students were faring in the postsecondary environment. The Kingsbury Center developed the KTP and C.I.T.Y.

programs based on feedback from former students who were not faring well in the postsecondary environment.

As noted in Chapter 1, the transition to the postsecondary environment is not a single life event. Rather it is a series of smaller steps that lead students into becoming an independent adult. Along a similar vein, the conceptual framework of this study on career-development theory embraced a similar philosophy. The selection of a career or vocation is an ongoing, continuous process while individuals obtain more career-related experiences that shape and define their self-concept as a person (Super, 1952). In other words, career development occurs over an individual's life span—it is not a single life event but a series of smaller steps (Super, 1990). The career-development theory led to the development of a career-development model developed by Sitlington and colleagues that led to the growth of transition programming models, as discussed in Chapter 2 (e.g., Halpern's Quality of Life and Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition). Sitlington and colleagues (2007) provided a career-development model that focused on these four phases of career-development: awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation. The KTP and C.I.T.Y. program supported Super's theory, by utilizing the career-development model developed by Sitlington and colleagues, that provided former students with awareness (e.g., career exploration course and job site visits), exploration (e.g., integrated career skills course and job shadowing), preparation (e.g., internship), and assimilation (e.g., internship). For this group of young adults with LD in the postsecondary environment, they are continuing to strive for career assimilation.

The results of the study indicated for this group of young adults with LD that they (a) are going to college and working part-time, (b) are currently or have been employed

since high school, (c) continue to live with their parents with a few students living on or off campus, (d) are satisfied with their lives, and (e) felt that the KTP/CITY program helped them work towards their postsecondary goals. As the results pertain to Indicator 14, the majority of former students (94%, n=15) met the criteria of “enrolled in higher education. There was only one student (6%, n=1) met the third criteria of “some other employment”. Overall, the results were positive for this group of young adults with LD in working towards their postsecondary goals.

Although the overall results were positive, there were some areas of concern that arose when evaluating and reviewing former student interviews. The areas of concern addressed in Chapter 5 included: KTP and C.I.T.Y. transition program issues, overemphasis on the college pathway, length of time to obtain a postsecondary degree, lack of disclosure in the workplace, connection to adult services, and lack of understanding about employee benefits. In order to move forward, in a transition community, it is important to discern what areas of concern apply to just youth with LD or to all youth with disabilities. In addition, from a policy perspective, it is important to discern what trends that apply to students with and without disabilities. The continued use of follow-up and follow-along studies helps policymakers, educators, families and youth with disabilities to make more informed decisions.

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Appendix A

Template Cover Letter for Expert Panelists on Content Validity

Dear _____,

My advisor, Dr. Lynda West, is requesting your assistance in participating as an expert panelist in my study to provide input on my survey that is examining post-school outcomes of students with learning disabilities. You have been selected because you are recognized in the field of Special Education to have expertise in the area of transition from high school to postsecondary life. In this study, the young adults with disabilities participated in a career exploration and community-based transition program rooted in developing career and work experiences for youth with disabilities. The study has two purposes: (1) validate the survey instrument and (2) survey young adults with learning disabilities on their post-school outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living/quality of life. The conceptual framework for the study is grounded upon career development and vocational development theories that are the foundation for transition programming.

I seek your expertise in validating my instrument. The methodology of my study consists of using an adapted telephone survey from an existing post-school outcomes survey from the National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO) that meets Indicator 14 requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004. It has come to my attention that the questions from the NPSO instrument have not been tested for reliability or validity (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012). By agreeing to participate in the expert panel, you will help the field in validating an instrument that can be recommended to states and districts. In addition, you will help me validate the instrument before following-up on post-school outcomes of young adults with learning disabilities.

There are two components in reviewing instrument for content validity. First, I will explain the conceptual definitions that the questions on the instrument should be

measured against. In this study, the conceptual definitions refer to the transition domains of employment, postsecondary education, and independent/quality of life. Secondly, the instrument needs to be reviewed for item content, item style, and comprehensiveness (Grant & Davis, 1997). Item content and style focus on the individual components of the instrument. The questions need to be representative, clear, and aligned to the goals of the study. Comprehensiveness concentrates on the entirety of the instrument and measuring to the conceptual definitions. In addition, I need you to assess the instrument for areas of omission as well as provide suggestions for improving the instrument items to ensure that instrument is aligned to the transition domains. A copy of the survey is attached for you to look at as you complete the review instrument protocol form.

Please see the attached documents for further instructions.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me! Please feel free to submit this to me electronically to my email account. If you want to submit a hard copy, please mail it to my home address: 2822 South Abingdon Street, Apt. B2, Arlington, VA 22206. Would you be willing to review? Would you be able to send any revisions back by (Month) (Day)?

Many thanks for your consideration of my request.

Best to you,

Jessica Queener

Doctoral Candidate

The George Washington University

Phone: 571-312-2010

Email: jqueener@gwmail.gwu.edu

Form A: Conceptual Definitions

Form B: Review Instrument Protocol

Form A
Conceptual Definitions

The conceptual definitions that the instrument measures are to be based on current guidelines provided to states and districts. The conceptual definitions are defined below:

Postsecondary Education

- *Enrolled in higher education* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program) or college/university (4-or-more year program) for at least one complete term at anytime in the year since leaving high school (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.12).
- *Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school that is less than a 2-year program) (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.12).

Employment

- *Competitive employment* means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.13).
- *Some other employment* means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school.

This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services.) (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.13).

Independent Living/Quality of Life

- *Independent Living/Quality of Life* means youth have identified with the following activities: plans to have a place to live and have plans for future living arrangements, social experiences, recreation/leisure activities, transportation, life-skill activities, social service agencies, and high school experiences (Alverson et al., 2011).

Form B

Review Instrument Protocol Template

Directions: Please evaluate each question item to measure for representativeness, clarity, and comprehensiveness.

- Representativeness—The item reflects, samples, and measures the transition domains (e.g. employment, postsecondary education, and independent/quality of life).
- Clarity—The items are well-written, distinct, and appropriate for young adults with disabilities. All dimensions of the transition domains are included in the instrument.

Transition Domain Items	Representativeness	Transition Dimensions
Conceptual/Theoretical Definitions: Postsecondary Education Employment Independent Living (Please see Form A for definitions for each category)	1= the item is <u>not representative</u> of transition domain 2= the item needs <u>major revisions</u> to be representative of transition domain 3= the item needs <u>minor revisions</u> to representative of transition domain 4= the item <u>is representative</u> of transition domain	1= subjective 2= objective 3= unable to classify
1. Did you participate in your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings in high school? 2. Did you have the following work or training experiences in high school? (Service Learning, Volunteer, Paid work, and other) 3. In your junior year, you were in the C.I.T.Y. project. As part of the program, you went to the George Washington University to	<div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3 4</div> Comments:	<div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center;">1 2 3</div> Comments:

learn about different career and jobs. What did you see as the purpose of the C.I.T.Y. project?		
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Clarity: Are the transition domain items well written and distinct for individuals with disabilities to answer in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living?

Yes, the following items are clear (in the space below, indicate which items are clear):

No, some of the items are unclear (in the space below, indicate which items are unclear):

Suggestion for making the items clearer:

Appendix B

Template Cover Letter for Panelists for Pilot Test on Face Validity

Dear _____,

My advisor, Dr. Lynda West, is requesting your assistance in participating as a panelist in my study to provide input on my survey that is examining post-school outcomes of students with learning disabilities. You have been selected because you are recognized as an important stakeholder and invested in the outcomes of the students who have participated in the Kingsbury Transition Program as well as the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.). In this study, the young adults with disabilities participated in a career exploration and community-based transition program rooted in developing career and work experiences for youth with disabilities. The study has two purposes: (1) validate the survey instrument and (2) survey young adults with learning disabilities on their post-school outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living/quality of life. The conceptual framework for the study is grounded upon career development and vocational development theories that are the foundation for transition programming.

I seek your expertise in validating my instrument. The methodology of my study consists of using an adapted telephone survey from an existing post-school outcomes survey from the National Post-School Outcomes Center (NPSO) that meets Indicator 14 requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004. It has come to my attention that the questions from the NPSO instrument have not been tested for reliability or validity (R. Kellems, personal communication, August 6, 2012). By agreeing to participate, you will help the field in validating an instrument that can be recommended to states and districts. In addition, you will help me validate the instrument before following-up on post-school outcomes of young adults with learning disabilities.

There are two components in reviewing this instrument for face validity. First, I will explain the conceptual definitions that the questions on the instrument should be

measured against. In this study, the conceptual definitions refer to the transition domains of employment, postsecondary education, and independent/quality of life. Secondly, as a reviewer, you will assess using the absolute technique method of measurement. The absolute technique method involves assessing each instrument as a whole and by item on a 5-point scale (Nevo, 1985). The questions need to be suitable to the goals of the study and match closely to the conceptual definitions. In addition, I need you to assess the instrument for areas of omission as well as provide suggestions for improving the instrument items to ensure that instrument is aligned to the transition domains. A copy of the survey is attached for you to look at as you complete the review instrument protocol form. Please see the attached documents for further instructions.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me! Please feel free to submit this to me electronically to my email account. If you want to submit a hard copy, please mail it to my home address: 2822 South Abingdon Street, Apt. B2, Arlington, VA 22206. Would you be willing to review? Would you be able to send any revisions back by (Month) (Day)?

Best to you,
Jessica Queener
Doctoral Candidate
The George Washington University
Phone: 571-312-2010
Email: jqueener@gwmail.gwu.edu

Form A: Conceptual Definitions
Form B: Face Validity Review Instrument Protocol

Form A
Conceptual Definitions

The conceptual definitions that the instrument measures are to be based on current guidelines provided to states and districts. The conceptual definitions is defined below:

Postsecondary Education

- *Enrolled in higher education* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in a community college (2-year program) or college/university (4-or-more year program) for at least one complete term at anytime in the year since leaving high school (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.12).
- *Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training* means youth have been enrolled on a full- or part-time basis for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school that is less than a 2-year program) (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.12).

Employment

- *Competitive employment* means that youth have worked for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.13).
- *Some other employment* means youth have worked for pay or been self-employed for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school.

This includes working in a family business (e.g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services). (Part B Indicator Measurement Table, 2013, p.13).

Independent Living/Quality of Life

- *Independent Living/Quality of Life* means youth have identified with the following activities: plans to have a place to live and have plans for future living arrangements, social experiences, recreation/leisure activities, transportation, life-skill activities, social service agencies, and high school experiences (Alverson et al., 2011).

Form B

Face Validity Review Instrument Protocol Template

Directions: Please evaluate each question item to measure for suitability to each transition domain.

Transition Domain Items	Absolute Measurement
Conceptual/Theoretical Definitions: Postsecondary Education Employment Independent Living (Please see Form A for definitions for each category)	1= the question item <u>is irrelevant or unsuitable</u> of the transition domain 2= the question item <u>is inadequate</u> of the transition domain 3= the question item <u>is adequate</u> of the transition domain 4= the question item <u>is very suitable</u> of the transition domain 5= the question item <u>is extremely suitable</u> of the transition domain
1. Did you participate in your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings in high school? 2. Did you have the following work or training experiences in high school? (Service Learning, Volunteer, Paid work, and other) 3. In your junior year, you were in the C.I.T.Y. project. As part of the program, you went to the George Washington University to learn about different career and jobs. What did you see as the purpose of the C.I.T.Y. project?	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">1 2 3 4 5</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">1 2 3 4 5</div> Comments: <div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">1 2 3 4 5</div> Comments:

Clarity: Are the question items well written and distinct for individuals with disabilities to answer in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living?

Yes, the following items are clear (in the space below, indicate which items are clear):

No, some of the items are unclear (in the space below, indicate which items are unclear):

Suggestion for making the items clearer:

Appendix C
Information about the Research Study
A Post-School Study of Students with Learning Disabilities
Informed Consent Letter
IRB #091230

You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Lynda West of the Department of Special Education and Disability Studies, George Washington University (GW). Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. Your academic standing or the status of your employment will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time.

This purpose of the study is to conduct a follow-up study evaluating postsecondary outcomes of former students with learning disabilities (LD) that have participated in a transition program at a secondary private school in Washington, D.C. The researcher will conduct a telephone survey asking questions about your post-school outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Additional questions will be asked regarding your high school experience and your quality of life since leaving high school.

The research will be conducted by telephone from the researcher's home in Arlington, Virginia.

A total of 60 participants from the Kingsbury Center will be asked to take part in this study. You will be one of the approximately 60 participants to be asked to take part in a telephone survey.

If you choose to take part in this study, you will conduct a telephone interview with the investigator, Ms. Jessica Queener. The total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study is approximately 30 minutes on a day in October that fits in your schedule.

There are no physical risks associated with this study. There is, however, the possible risk of loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential, however, this cannot be guaranteed. The investigator will digitally record all interviews. A pseudonym name will be created by the participant to add an additional layer of privacy and confidentiality. Some of the questions the investigator will ask you as part of the study may make you feel uncomfortable. You may refuse to answer any of the questions, and you may take a break at any time during the telephone survey. You may stop your participation in this study at any time.

You will not benefit directly from your participation in the study. The benefits to science and humankind that might result from this study: a better understanding of the high school experiences, postsecondary outcomes, and quality of life of young adults with LD since leaving high school. Your participation in the study allows Kingsbury to receive information about how former students are faring in the postsecondary environment.

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

The investigator can decide to withdraw you from the study at any time. You could be taken off the study for reasons solely to you (for example, not following study-related directions from the Investigator) or because the entire study is stopped.

If the results of this research study are reported in journals and at scientific meetings and professional conferences, the people who participated in the study will not be named or identified. The investigator does request permission to use poignant quotes from the interview that might identify you as a participant. The investigator will contact you to request your written permission to use your quotes. GW will not release any information about your research involvement without your written permission, unless required by law.

To ensure confidentiality, all surveys will be randomly coded with the pseudonym name for each participant. As soon as the interviews are completed and transcribed, the investigator will dispose of the audio recordings and any identifiable information, such as contact information. All electronic data related to the study will be in password-protected programs on the investigator's computer. All hard copies of the data related to the study will be maintained in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's home.

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University at telephone number (202) 994-2715 can provide further information about your rights as a research participant. If you think you have been harmed in this study, please report to the Principal Investigator of this study or call the Office of Human Research immediately. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting Ms. Jessica Queener, doctoral student, at this telephone number (571) 312-2010.

To ensure anonymity, your signature is not required on this document unless you prefer to sign it. Your willingness to participate in this study is implied if you proceed with completing the telephone survey.

*Please keep a copy of this document in case you want to read it again.

Appendix D
Kingsbury Center Information Letter
Post-High School Outcomes Survey

December 2013

Dear *(Former High School Student's Name)*,

The Kingsbury Center is asking questions of their former students. The people selected for this study are Kingsbury students who graduated or left school in 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 and who received special education services while they were in high school. You have been asked to help with this survey. Your answers will help Kingsbury better plan transition activities for future students. This data will be used for a doctoral student project and will be provided to the Kingsbury Center. We may use the information for reporting requirements to the U.S. Department of Education.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please contact, Jessica D. Queener, doctoral student, representing The George Washington University at (571) 312-2010 or jqueener@gwu.edu. She would like to ask you some questions about where you are living, where you are working, and if you are continuing your education. If the results of this research study are reported in journals and at scientific meetings and professional conferences, the people who participated in the study will not be named or identified. The questions will take approximately 30 minutes to answer and will help Kingsbury better prepare current students for adult life after high school. The survey will be conducted by telephone and will be recorded to ensure your responses are noted correctly. Your help in answering these questions is important.

The group we are calling is small, so each response is critical.

You can call (*transition coordinator*) at (*local school number*) if you have any questions about this survey or if you have a phone number that you would like us to use to call you. You can also call Jessica Queener, Survey Project Coordinator, at (571) 312-2010 if you have any questions regarding this survey.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

(Local Name and Title former student or parent will recognize)

(From "DPI Letter," by Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey, 2010. Adapted with permission.)

Appendix E
Survey Forms
Kingsbury Transition Program
Follow-Up Survey—Telephone Interview

INTRODUCTION

Section A. Introduction

Hello. This is (interviewer name). May I please speak with (former student)? I'm calling in regard to a study on Kingsbury's Transition Program. The people selected for this study are students who graduated between 2009 and 2011. Peri-Anne Chobot, CEO of the Kingsbury Center, has given approval for this information to be collected. Did you receive the informed consent form and information letter from Kingsbury about the study? At this time, do you have any questions about the study?

Your individual answers will not be shared with anyone outside of this study. The questions will take approximately 30 minutes and will help the Kingsbury Center better prepare current students for adult life after high school. The telephone interview will be digitally recorded to make sure I write down what you said. Recordings will not be shared with anyone outside of this study. Your help in answering these questions is important. Your answers will help schools better plan transition services and activities for future students. You will also have the chance to share ways that you think schools can do a better job of preparing young people for adult life.

May we complete the survey now?

(From "Introduction," by Fairfax County Public High School Post School Outcomes Survey, 2008. Adapted with permission.)

PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Section B. Profile and Demographics (Remind former students: You do not have to answer a question if you don't want to...)

Interviewer: My first few questions focus on who you are.

1. Enter student survey number (researcher provides number):

2. Gender (researcher assigns gender): _____

3. Please create a name: _____

4. Student's age: _____

5a. Date student graduated school: Month: ___ Day: ___ Year: ___

5b. If student did not graduate, date student exited school: Month ___ Day: ___ Year:

6. Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic or Latino?

Yes

No

7. Please identify which racial category best describes you.

Asian

African American

Hispanic/Latino

White

Two or more races

No answer

HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Section C. High School Experience

Interviewer: My next questions are about your high school experience with the Kingsbury transition program.

8. Did you attend your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings in high school?

Yes

No

No answer

9. Did you actively participate and contribute in your IEP meetings (e.g., introduce yourself, share an opinion, involved in the conversation)?

Yes

No

No answer

10. Did you lead your IEP meetings?

Yes

No

No answer

11. Did you meet with a Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), and Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) counselor while you were in high school?

Yes

No

Unsure

12. Did you have the following work or training experiences in high school?

- Service Learning (e.g., volunteer activity with academic project-based parts)
- Volunteer work experience
- Paid work experience
- Internship
- Other: (Please specify) _____

13. In the Career Investigations for Transitioning Youth (C.I.T.Y.) program, there were three parts: job site visits, job shadowing, and summer internship. As part of the program, you went to the George Washington University to learn about different careers and jobs.

Which part(s) did you participate in?

a. Job Site Visits

i. What were some departments you remember visiting?

ii. What did you learn from the job site visits?

b. Job Shadowing

i. Which job sites did you job shadow? (**Go to ii if they do not answer or remember**)

ii. What did you learn at the job shadowing sites?

c. Summer internship (**if not, go to #14**)

i. Where did you intern?

ii. What did you learn from your internship experience?

14. In your junior year, you were in the C.I.T.Y. program. As part of the program, you went to the George Washington University to learn about different careers and jobs.

a. Do you think you benefited from the C.I.T.Y. program?

b. If so, how did you benefit from participating in the C.I.T.Y. program?

c. If not, why did you not benefit from participating in the C.I.T.Y. program?

15. Please remember back to high school. What were your goals when you graduated?

a. Education:

b. Employment:

c. Independent living:

16. Have you achieved your goals?

If not, do you anticipate achieving your goals in a year or two?

Or, have you changed your goals?

If you have changed your goals, what are your new goals?

a. Education:

b. Employment:

c. Independent living:

17. Did participating in C.I.T.Y. help you identify your postsecondary goals?

18. Did you find that participating in the Kingsbury Transition Program (e.g., transition courses in 9-12 grade: Personal Awareness, Career Exploration, Integrated Career Skills, Senior Seminar) to be helpful in working towards or reaching your postsecondary goals after leaving high school?

Yes—

If yes, how was the program helpful to you in working towards or reaching your postsecondary goals?

No—

If no, how was the program not helpful to you in working towards or reaching your postsecondary goals?

19. Did you have a paying job while you were enrolled in high school?

Yes

No

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Section D. Enrollment History

Interviewer: Now, I'm going to ask you about the transition area of postsecondary education and training (e.g., two-year or four-year college/university setting or career technical education program).

20. At any time since leaving high school, have you ever been enrolled in any type of school, training, or education program?

Yes (if yes, go to #22)

No (if no, go to #21)

21. If no, why did you decide not to attend a training program, college, or university?

I was employed

I don't like school

I don't want to go to school

I could not pass the entrance test

I didn't have the skills to continue in school

I didn't have the money to go to school

My family doesn't want me to go to school

I needed to take care of family responsibilities

I did not have transportation

Other: (Please specify)

Go to Section G, #44

22. What type of school or training program did you attend?

Vocational technical training (e.g., automotive, carpentry, cosmetology, culinary arts)

Adult or community education class(es) (e.g. language classes, test prep classes, career exploration)

Two-year community college

Four-year college or university

Other: (Please specify) _____

23. Are you currently enrolled in any type of school, training, or education program?

Yes

No

24. Since leaving high school, have you completed a training or degree program?

Yes (if yes, go to Section F, #38)

No (if no, go to #25)

25. If no, what is the main reason you did not finish a training program or degree?

Still working to complete the training program or degree

Changed career goal, no longer needed the training

Decided to get a job

Didn't like going to school

Didn't have the money to continue

Didn't have the skills or knowledge to continue

Didn't pass the entrance test

Didn't pass placement tests/remedial courses

Needed to take care of family responsibilities

Transportation issue of getting to and from the training program or college/university

Other: (Please specify) _____

If currently enrolled, go to Section E, #26

If not currently enrolled or have completed a postsecondary education program, go to Section G, #44.

Section E. Currently Enrolled

26. What type of school or training program are you currently attending?

Vocational technical training (e.g., automotive, carpentry, cosmetology, culinary arts)

Adult or community education class(es) (e.g., language classes, test prep classes, career exploration)

Two-year community college

Four-year college or university

Other: (Please specify) _____

27. What is your major area of study? _____

28. Are you enrolled in your program full-time, part-time, or less than part-time?

Full-time

Part-time

Less than part-time

Other: (Please specify) _____

29. How many semesters have you been enrolled taking classes?

Zero semester (e.g., in first semester)

One semester

Two semesters

Three semesters

Four semesters

More than four semesters

30. Please share with me what were some of the courses you have taken over the last year.

Courses:

31. Do you anticipate obtaining a degree, certification, or a professional license?

Yes

No

32. What degree, certification, or professional license are you working towards?

33. When do you anticipate receiving your degree, certification, or professional license?

34. Have you requested support services/accommodations from Disability Support Services or from the Counseling Center while at the training program, college, or university?

Yes

No, I do know how to request them, but I don't feel that I need them

No, I do know how to request them, but I haven't done that

No, I do not know how to request them

If yes, please go to #35

If no, please go to #37

35. Did you receive support services/accommodations from Disability Support Services or from the Counseling Center while at the training program, college, or university?

Yes

No (**if no, go to #36a**)

36a. Currently, do you use any of the following services? (Check all that apply)

Tutor

Writing center or math center

Note taker

None

Other: (Please specify) _____

36b. Currently, do you use any of the following accommodations? (Check all that apply)

Assistive technology

Extra time on tests or assignments

Audiobooks

Recording Lectures

None

Other (Please specify)_____

37. Are you satisfied with your postsecondary institution, or would you like to change to another school?

Satisfied with postsecondary institution

Dissatisfied with postsecondary institution

Opted not to answer

Please go to Section G, #44

Section F. Completed a Program or Degree

38. What type of school or training program did you attend?

- Vocational technical training
- Community education class(es)
- Two-year community college
- Four-year college or university
- Other: (Please specify) _____

39. Did you receive a degree, certification, or credentials from your training program?

- Yes
- No

40. What was the highest degree you obtained?

- Training certificate
- Associate Degree (AA)
- Bachelor's Degree (B.S. or B.A.)
- Other: (Please specify) _____

41. Did you request support services/accommodations from the Disability Support Services or from the Counseling Center while at the training program, college, or university?

Yes

No, I did know how to request them, but I didn't feel that I needed them

No, I do know how to request them, but I haven't done that

No, I did not know how to request them

If yes, please go to #42

If no, please go to Section G, #44

42. Did you receive support services/accommodations from the Disability Support Services or from the Counseling Center while at the training program, college, or university?

Yes

No

43a. Did you use any of the following services? (Check all that apply)

Tutor

Writing center or math center

Note taker

None

Other: (Please specify) _____

43b. Did you use any of the following accommodations? (Check all that apply)

Assistive technology

Extra time on tests or assignments

Audiobooks

Recording lectures

None

Other (Please specify)_____

Go to Section G, #44 when completed

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES

Section G. Social Service Agencies

44. Do you receive help from any of the following agencies or services?

- Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) or Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Medicaid
- Food Stamps
- Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)
- Employment assistance (WIA) (e.g. one-stop workforce development or career center)
- Housing assistance (Section 8)
- Mental health services
- Other: (Please specify) _____

45. If you receive Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, have you had any meetings with a VR counselor since you left high school?

- Yes
- No

If no, go to #47

46. If you have had meetings with a VR counselor, have you found the services to be helpful to you in reaching your employment goals?

Yes

No

47. What type of services or assistance did you receive from the agencies or services?

Go to Section H, #48 when completed

EMPLOYMENT

Section H. Employment History

Interviewer: Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your work experience.

48. At anytime since leaving high school, have you ever worked?

Yes

No

If No, please proceed to Section J, #78

49. Since leaving high school, how many jobs have you had?

1 job

2-4 jobs

5-9 jobs

More than 9 jobs

50. Since leaving high school, have you worked for at least 3 months (about 90 days) in one job?

Yes

No

No answer

51. Are you currently employed (e.g., working for pay at or above the minimum wage)?

Yes (if yes, continue to #52)

No (if no, proceed to Section I, #64)

52. How many hours a week do you usually work? (if more than one job—total up the hours for all jobs)

1-20 hours per week

21-35 hours per week

36-40 hours per week

More than 41 hours per week

List of jobs:

1. _____ Hours: _____

2. _____ Hours: _____

3. _____ Hours: _____

53. How much do you get paid an hour or annually? (If more than one job—answer for each job.)

1. _____ Paid: _____

2. _____ Paid: _____

3. _____ Paid: _____

54. Describe the type of job you currently have.

- Entry-level jobs usually require little or no training
- Semi-skilled jobs usually require training or experience for about a year
- Skilled or technical jobs usually require training or education for more than a year
- Professional jobs usually require a college degree

55. Describe the job setting for your current job.

- In a company, business, or service
- In the military
- Self-employed
- In your family's business (e.g., auto repair shop, grocery store, bookstore)
- Other: (Please specify) _____
- Not applicable

56. How long have you had your current job?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- More than 12 months

57. How did you find your current job?

- Reading a newspaper or online newspaper
- Checking job engine websites (e.g., monster, LinkedIN, careerbuilder)
- Working with an employment agency or service (e.g., Department of Employment Services)
- Getting help from school personnel (e.g., teacher, transition coordinator)
- Using a job training service
- Talking with family or friends
- Working with an agency that supports people with disabilities (e.g. Rehabilitation Services Administration)
- Had this job as a work experience or training setting while in high school
- Other: (Please specify) _____

58. Do you receive any of the following benefits in your current job?

- Vacation
- Sick days or sick leave
- Health insurance (e.g., dental, and/or vision, and/or medical)
- Pension/retirement
- Other: (Please specify) _____

59. How satisfied are you in your current job?

- Satisfied with current job
- Want to change
- Mixed, depends, varies
- Don't know
- Opted not to answer

60. Would you rather work somewhere else?

- Yes
- No

61a. Have you requested accommodations on your current job?

- Yes **(If yes, go to #62)**
- No **(If no, go to #61b)**

61b. If no, why did you not request accommodations in your current job?

If no, please go to Section K, #81

62. Do you receive accommodations on your current job?

- Yes
- No

If no, please go to Section K, #81

63. What accommodations do you receive on your current job?

On-site job mentor

Modified responsibilities

Agency or program person who checks on your work

Modified work equipment (e.g., desk, voice recognition software, computer, or other assistive technology)

Other: (Please specify) _____

Go to Section K, #81 when completed

Section I: Not Currently Working, Previously Employed

64. How long have you been unemployed?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- More than 12 months

65. For the last job you had, about how many hours did you work each week? (if more than one job—total up the hours for all jobs)

- Less than 20 hours
- 21-35 hours per week
- 36-40 hours per week
- More than 41 hours per week

List of jobs:

1. _____ Hours: _____
2. _____ Hours: _____
3. _____ Hours: _____

66. How much were you paid per hour or paid annually at the last job you had? (if more than one job—answer for each job)?

1. _____ Paid: _____
2. _____ Paid: _____
3. _____ Paid: _____

67. Describe the type of job you had last.

- Entry-level jobs usually require little or no training
- Semi-skilled jobs usually require training or experience for about a year
- Skilled or technical jobs usually require training or education for more than a year
- Professional jobs usually require a college degree

68. Describe the job setting for your last job.

- In a company, business or service
- In the military
- Self-employed
- In your family's business (e.g., auto repair shop, grocery store, bookstore)
- Other: (Please specify) _____
- No answer

69. Did you receive any of the following benefits at your last job?

- Vacation
- Sick days or sick leave
- Health insurance (e.g., dental, and/or vision, and/or medical)
- Pension/retirement
- Other: (Please specify) _____

70. How did you find your last job?

- Reading a newspaper or online newspaper
- Checking job engine websites (e.g., monster, LinkedIN, careerbuilder)
- Working with an employment agency or service (e.g., Department of Employment Services)
- Getting help from school personnel (e.g. teacher, transition coordinator)
- Using a job training service
- Talking with family or friends
- Working with an agency that supports people with disabilities (e.g. Rehabilitation Services Administration)
- Had this job as a work experience or training setting while in high school

71. Since this job, have you tried to find another job?

- Yes
- No
- No answer

If yes, please go to question #72 and #73.

If no, please go to question #74.

72. Why are you no longer in your previous job?

73. What challenges are you facing as you search for a job?

Enrolled in training program, college, or university

Cannot find a job that I am interested in doing

Cannot find any job

Lack of skills needed

Need transportation

Need help finding a job

Need help keeping a job

Don't want to work

Was fired from last job

Parents and family don't want me to work

Health or disability concerns

Quit last job

Other _____

Continue to question #75

74. If you are currently not looking for work, why not?

Enrolled in training program, college, or university

Cannot find a job that I am interested in doing

Cannot find any job

Lack of skills needed

Need transportation

Need help finding a job

Need help keeping a job

Don't want to work

Was fired from last job

Parents/family don't want me to work

Health or disability concerns

Quit last job

Other: (Please specify) _____

75. Did you request accommodations on your last job?

Yes

No

If no, go to Section K, #81

If yes, go to #76

76. Did you receive accommodations on your last job?

Yes

No

If no, go to Section K, #81

If yes, go to #77

77. What accommodations did you receive on your last job?

On-site job mentor

Modified responsibilities

Agency or program person who checks on your work

Modified work equipment (e.g., desk, voice recognition software, computer, or other assistive technology)

Go to Section K, #81 when completed

Section J. Never Employed

78. Are you currently looking for work?

Yes (**go to #80**)

No (**go to #79**)

79. If you are currently not looking for work, why not? (check all that apply)

Enrolled in training program, college, or university

Cannot find a job that I am interested in doing

Cannot find any job

Lack of skills needed

Need transportation

Need help finding a job

Need help keeping a job

Don't want to work

Was fired from last job

Parents/family don't want me to work

Health or disability concerns

Quit last job

Other: (Please specify) _____

Go to Section K, go to #81

80. If you are looking for work, are you doing any of the following? (Check all that apply)

Reading a newspaper or online newspaper

Checking job engine websites (e.g., monster, LinkedIN, careerbuilder)

Turning in applications

Working with an employment agency or service (e.g., Department of Employment Services)

Getting help from school personnel (e.g., teacher, transition coordinator)

Using a job training service

Talking with family and friends

Working with an agency that supports people with disabilities (e.g., Rehabilitation Services Administration)

Other: (Please specify) _____

Go to Section K, #81 when completed

Section K. Independent Living

Interviewer: I have some questions about your living arrangement and levels of satisfaction.

81. Describe your current living arrangement. (Respondents can pick more than one)

- Alone
- Alone, with support
- With spouse or significant other
- With a roommate
- With family (e.g., parents, grandparents, siblings, aunt/uncle)
- On a military base
- On a college campus
- Other: (Please specify) _____

82. What do you expect your living arrangement to be in a year or two from now?

(Respondents can pick more than one)

- Alone
- Alone, with support
- With spouse or significant other
- With a roommate
- With family (e.g., parents, grandparents, siblings, aunt/uncle)
- On a military base
- On a college campus

O Other: (Please specify) _____

83. What do you like about your current living arrangement? What do you dislike?

What do you like?

What do you dislike?

84. For each method of transportation, indicate whether it is available in your community and whether you use it on a regular basis to get around the community.

O Walk available/use it

O Ride a bike, scooter, skateboard available/use it

O Drive a car available/use it

O Ride a public bus or mass transit available/use it

O Ride in a taxi available/use it

O Ask friends or family to take me places available/use it

O Other: (Please specify) _____

Go to Section L, #85 when completed

CONCLUSIONS

Section L. Conclusions

Interviewer: To wrap up this survey, I have a couple of questions I would like to ask of you.

85. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life right now?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsure
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied
- No answer

86. What suggestions, recommendations, or comments do you have for Kingsbury Center to improve the preparation for employment and adult life?