

### ***Community Transition Program Description***

Garden Stated Pathways to Independence, The Turning Point Program at Bergen Community College, is a two-year inclusive postsecondary transition program for students with intellectual disabilities ages 18-30 for students who are dual-enrolled under IDEA or have exited high school. The program began in 2011 when Bergen Community College was awarded a five-year TPSID Grant, Transition and Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities, through the Department of Education. The College was awarded a second TPSID grant in 2016. The program is full time and housed on Bergen Community College's campus in Paramus, NJ. Students do not have to reside in Bergen County or the State of New Jersey to participate. Turning Point's approach utilizes student-centered planning, enhanced academic and peer mentoring support to provide an inclusive college experience that promotes the advancement of skills and knowledge in the areas of career/vocational skill development, academic enrichment, and socialization. Program goals focus on assisting students in developing the skills and experiences necessary to prepare for adult life in the areas of employment, self-determination, self-advocacy and decision making. Academic coursework is modified to meet a 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade equivalency in reading and math. This curriculum includes courses such as Career Education, Financial Literacy, English Skills, Social Thinking and Success 101 which are designed to enhance basic skills, promote self and social awareness, and to develop self-advocacy skills. Students also have the opportunity to take non-modified college level electives in an area of interest and a Career Pathway Credentialing and Certification Course that will align with a student's vocational goal. Turning Point students have access to all facilities, resources and student support services that are available to anyone enrolled at Bergen Community College. Students participate in campus clubs, activities and service learning projects sponsored by the Office of Student Life. Turning Point provides Pre-Employment Transition Services including job exploration coaching, work-based learning experiences both on the Bergen Community College Campus and in supported internships in each student's local community, workplace readiness training, soft skill and social skill development as well as instruction in self-advocacy. Travel training is provided in year two as students prepare for their off-campus internships. Students will explore career options, receive feedback based on skill assessments and determine their vocational goal based on skills, abilities and interests. Participants who successfully complete all program requirements will receive a non-degree Certificate of Achievement through the Division of Continuing Education. The Division of Continuing Education and Turning Point Program offer a variety of Career Path credentialing options to enrolled students that offer them the opportunity to earn industry-valued certifications and credentials. Successful completion of these credentialing options will assist students in attaining competitive employment within their chosen field after graduation with the assistance of the program's career placement specialists. Current Career Pathway options include: Child Development Associate, Dietary Aide, Certified Logistics and Manufacturing, Clerical Assistant with Electronic Records Management, Hospitality for Guest Service Professionals. Students are connected to community-based supports and resources they can utilize post-graduation. Turning Point will continue to work with students seeking jobs in need of assistance post-graduation and coordinate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services to support a student's plan for employment.

