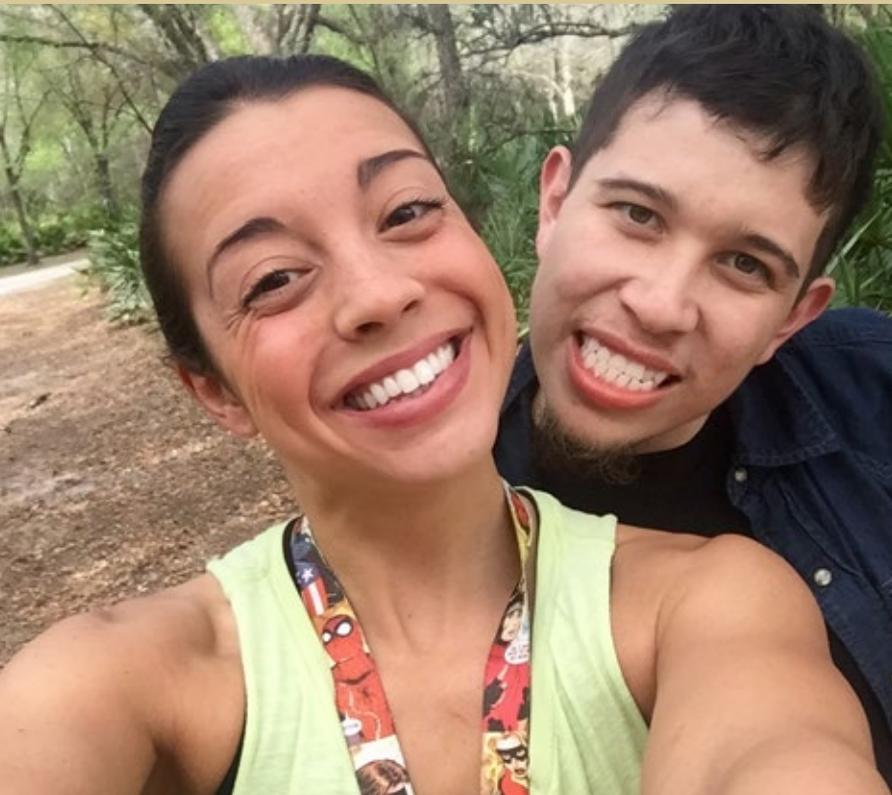


Student Participation Requirements:

- Attend all scheduled classes
- Complete assignments and projects
- Participate in all group activities
- Complete required mentoring time
- Complete required internship hours

Eligibility Requirements:

- Completed high school and is between 18-25
- A diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Has transportation to and from the USF Tampa campus
- Has a functional communication system
- Has a clear desire to work or attend college and can commit to completing a 30 week program
- Has demonstrated the ability to regulate his/her behavior with minimal directions within public settings



The Learning Academy at USF

College of Behavioral and Community Sciences
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MHC 2113A
Tampa, FL 33612
Phone: (813)974-2996
Fax: (813)974-6115

<http://learningacademy.fmhi.usf.edu>

A Program of



"The Learning Academy helped me identify my career goals by exploring my talents and skills."

-Learning Academy Student



The Learning Academy

at the University of South Florida is a 30 week program designed to provide a structured employment-focused curriculum for individuals diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, between the ages of 18-25 after they have graduated from high school.

The Learning Academy provides services, supports and experiential opportunities that will enable participants to develop and achieve employment goals and enhance independence. Employability skills addressed are self-knowledge, organization, time management, goal setting and attainment, conflict resolution and success on the job. Participants also engage in multiple career assessment activities to identify their strengths, skills, talents, interests and learn how they translate to work. Preparation for job attainment includes interviewing skills, resume development and finding employment.

Real life experiences and expectations through internships and peer mentoring complement the class work to provide generalization of skills and support personalized goals.

Outcomes for participants include:

- A clearly defined employment plan with follow up activities to measure achievement of identified goals
- Specific knowledge of one's strengths, abilities and preferences related to employment
- Strategies to set and achieve employment goals
- Awareness of and experience with customized techniques to enhance employment success
- Career research and exploration and job seeking skills

"My son has shown a remarkable increase in socialization and communication skills. He is also developing independence faster than mom can keep up with. It's great!"

-Learning Academy Parent

About the Program

Learning Academy students receive a combination of individualized and group instruction, **hands-on** experiential activities and interactive peer mentoring.

Students engage in a **self-discovery** process to gain an increased awareness of their strengths, preferences, and abilities with the goal of success in employment.

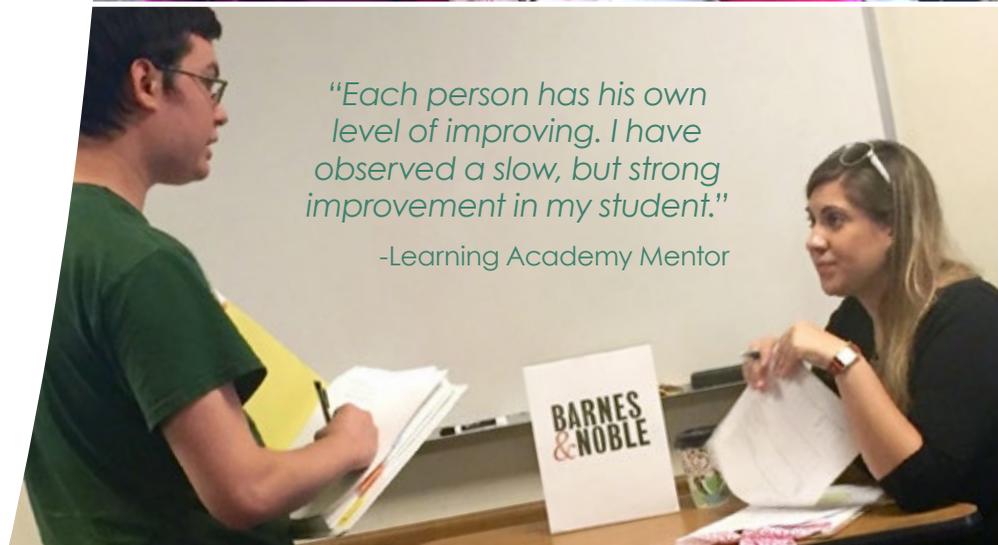
The curriculum addresses **employment skills**, from understanding accommodations and supports on the job to conducting career research and effective job searches. Interviewing, resume and cover letter development are also included.

Embedded throughout the curriculum are the reinforcement of time management, organizational skills, conflict resolution, and effective **communication skills**.

Students engage in experiential learning with the support of **USF student peer mentors** who help them practice learned skills in natural settings. Mentors also introduce students to social activities on the USF campus and surrounding community.

Each student completes a 60 hour **internship** in the area of their preferred career.

Life skills that are essential for independence are included in the second semester while students are also completing their internships. Topics covered include financial responsibility and money management, dealing with credit, adult relationships, health and wellness, transportation options, managing an apartment and handling personal and medical appointments.



"Each person has his own level of improving. I have observed a slow, but strong improvement in my student."

-Learning Academy Mentor