

# CAREER CONNECTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Blackdisabledandproud.org

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## College Career-Building Opportunities

Research Assistantships ✧  
 Internships ✧ Work Study  
 ✧ Study Abroad ✧ Honor  
 Societies ✧ Sororities &  
 Fraternities ✧ Volunteering  
 ✧ Computer Trainings ✧  
 Student Clubs & Activities ✧  
 Foreign Language Courses  
 ✧ Service Learning ✧

## Developing Your Résumé in College

There are many things you can do in college to make yourself more attractive to employers. Here are a few suggestions:

- Become computer and Internet savvy.** Learn how to use a computer, consider taking a typing class, and know how to build a simple website. Figure out disability-related access features or equipment you need.
- Get experience doing things and building skills,** like using office equipment, working on team projects, managing timelines and deadlines, doing research on topics, or conducting presentations or trainings. And work your way up the ladder—most supervisors appreciate hard workers who are willing to do this, and will quickly promote you.
- Find a mentor.** Ideally, this will be a professor or someone working in your field or your dream job, but you may also want to find a mentor with a disability similar to yours. Ask questions to get advice about what you need to do in college to make yourself marketable. At graduation, ask your mentor to help you find jobs and review your résumé.
- Visit career services as soon as you can.** Yes, the first month of your freshman year is the perfect time to go! Get on their mailing list for workshops, summer internship announcements, and career fairs. Ask who can help you review your résumé, practice interviewing, etc. Ask about other offices or departments you should know about (e.g., service learning programs, study abroad).
- Experiment with accommodations.** Remember that it's easier to try new disability accommodations in college — not in a job. Find what works for you in classes, internships, field placements, student activities, and work study jobs.



## What Do I Tell Employers?

Here are a few considerations for talking about race, disability, sexual orientation or gender, etc. with employers, but also be sure to talk with your mentors, career services, and disability services.

- **Look at the company’s website and job posting.** If they brag about diversity or seek out applicants like you, go ahead and talk about yourself in your job application and cover letter.
- **Consider whether you really want to work there** if the company does not seem welcoming.
- **It is illegal for any employer to ask about your race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.** You can bring these up, but employers must not ask anything. If they do, just say, “That’s something I’d rather discuss after you hire me.”
- **Employers must provide disability accommodations for the job interview and any tour or other aspects of the process.** Politely ask for accommodations when scheduling an interview. If necessary, speak with someone in Human Resources; they typically handle these requests.
- **Frame your identities in positive ways.** Talk about yourself with

pride and confidence. Explain how your identities can be an asset, helping the company reach diverse customers and employees.

- **Be careful on social media!** Your future boss may check the Internet and social media to learn about you or how your disability, race, gender affect you (or if it affects your attitudes about others who are different from you).

## CAREER RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- **Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT)**—resources about college, technology, and employment, with a searchable database (start by searching for “employment”) (<https://www.washington.edu/doit/>)
- **The Job Accommodations Network** free advice about employment accommodations (<http://askjan.org/>)
- **Mobility International USA** has study abroad opportunities for people with disabilities and can help your campus in making study abroad opportunities accessible (<http://www.miusa.org/>)
- **The Workforce Recruitment Program** connects disabled college students and recent college grads with federal jobs (<https://wrp.gov/>)
- **The Office of Disability Employment Policy** provides numerous resources about disability employment, policy, and legal rights of employers and employees (<http://www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm>)

