

Fast Facts

What is **ANCHOR**?

Anchor is a proposed program designed to further assist students with ASD on the Bridgeport College campus.

Why?

Bridgeport College identified a recent need for strengthening services for students with ASD. ANCHOR will aim to increase retention, increase enrollment, and meet our college mission.

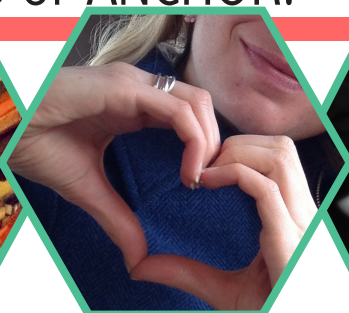
NUMBER OF CHILDREN IDENTIFIED WITH ASD



Focal points of ANCHOR:



ACADEMIC



PERSONAL



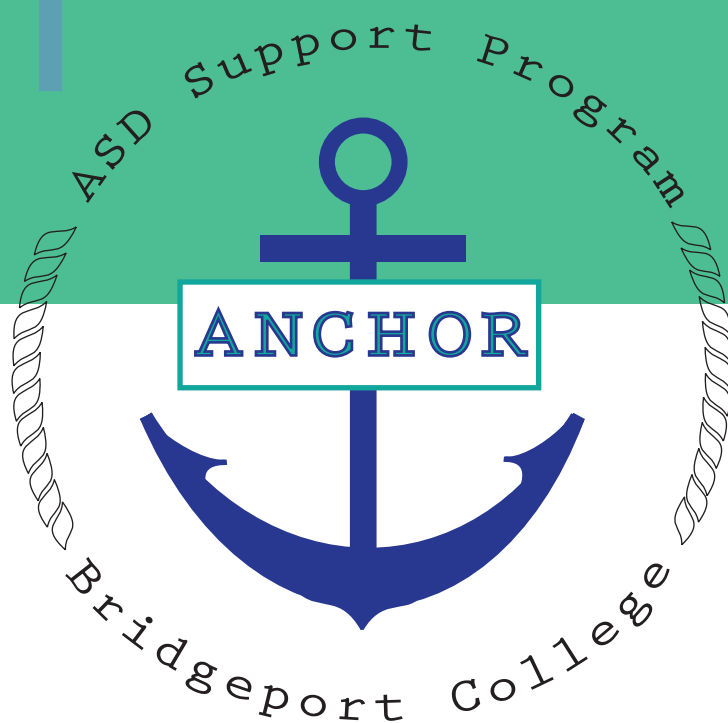
SOCIAL

Impact:

This proposed program includes a \$29,100 budget to offer programs and services that will positively impact students with ASD, Bridgeport College, residence life, multicultural services, student life, and more. View the [proposed services](#):



BRIDGEPORT
COLLEGE



Proposed Actions and Services:

- Pre-Orientation Assessment
- Living Skills Workshops
- On-Campus Job Connect
- Intentional Structured Events to Remove Anxiety
- 1:1 Meeting Opportunities between students with ASD/Advisors
- Peer-Mentor Training
- 9-credit Full-Time Option
- Develop Resource Toolkit
- Modified Residence Hall Options
- Common Read: Temple Grandin's "My Life in Pictures"

Next meeting:
MARCH 15, 2017

ANCHOR Program Budget Proposal

	Expenses Item	Cost per Unit	# of Unit	Total
Pre Orientation	Accommodations (dorms)	50.00	50	2,500.00
	3-Day Meal Pass	45.00	100	4,500.00
	Navigating College Book	20.00	50	1,000.00
	Workshop for Parents	1,000.00	1	1,000.00
				9,000.00
Personnel	Peer Mentors	600.00	25	15,000.00
	Faculty Training	1,000.00	1	1,000.00
	Student Training	1,000.00	1	1,000.00
				17,000.00
Promotional	Brochures	1.00	500	500.00
	Website Maintenance	500.00	1	500.00
	Posters	2.00	50	100.00
				1,100.00
Assessment	Email, Interview, Etc.			1,000.00
Develop ToolKit	Handbook for parents, faculty, students, who want to learn more about ANCHOR and useful tools	20.00	50	1,000.00

Yearly Expenses 2017-18

	Budgeted	Actual	Difference
Pre-Orientation	9,000.00		
Personnel	17,000.00		
Promotional	1,100.00		
Assessment	1,000.00		
ToolKit	1,000.00		
Total	29,100		

Where will this money come from:

Discuss options moving forward including, but not limited to general funds, fundraising, and/or grants.

Program Overview: ANCHOR is a comprehensive program that will assist students with ASD in navigating the waters of college by providing steady support throughout their education here at Bridgeport. The program will be housed in the Office of Disability Services and will focus on transition support in personal, social, and academic integration at Bridgeport.

This first year will have a goal of 50 program participants.

The Office of Disability Services is requesting a budget of \$29,100 to launch the costs of the program. The requested budget will cover the costs of the main program overhead expenses.

Rationale for Program: State wide and nationally there has been an increase of students entering post-secondary studies who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. To enable Bridgeport College to live out its mission and support these students, the college will need to create programs to offer support for ASD students to integrate personally, socially, and academically into the campus culture. By offering this support and assisting in integration into Bridgeport, we will be able to increase retention of ASD students. In addition, the ANCHOR program will assist in increasing enrollment of ASD students.



This document is designed to be read alongside the PPT slides as the transcript of the effective and engaging presentation on improving disability services for students with ASD at Bridgeport College.

Slide 1: As many of you know I am the Dean of Students here at Bridgeport College. Thank you for allowing us to share in part of the Growth and Development Committee meeting today. We hope that you'll be able to share our proposal with the rest of the Board of Trustees.

Slide 2: As a regional institution with about 7,000 students, we do a great job in preparing students for the future by building lifelong skills. We continue to be guided by our mission, including academic excellence and bridging students from college to careers. The reason we are here today is address the Disability Services Annual Report for 2016, which shows a significant enrollment increase of students on the autism spectrum. I believe that as an institution we do a great job supporting students on the autism spectrum, but as the enrollment of this particular population increases, we need to be proactive in the services we offer. The goal of our meeting today is to propose a program to implement tangible ways Bridgeport can excel in inclusivity and skill-building success for these students.

Slide 3: In order to examine our current offerings and how we can build on them, we have organized a task force with representatives from a number of departments on campus. Together we have created a program that would allow Bridgeport College to carry out its mission for students on the autism spectrum.

Slide 4: To provide context about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), it is a developmental disorder that is primarily characterized by communication difficulties, social and interpersonal barriers, and repetitive behaviors. ASD is on the rise in the United States with the CDC estimating that ASD affects 1 in 68 children. In the state of Connecticut alone, we have seen an increase of around 600% of children 8-21 years of age on the spectrum according to the Easter Seals state report on Connecticut. With this high increase, Connecticut has been active in ensuring these students have access to great education throughout their K-12 studies. These students are now graduating high school and have an opportunity to attend college, with many of these students already selecting Bridgeport College as their choice. We anticipate this trend to continue.

Slide 5: ASD students showcase many strengths that are an asset to our campus community. They bring diverse perspectives to problem-solving, high motivation around areas of interest, and often excel in STEM-related fields. However, students with ASD often struggle with navigating college, which effects personal, social, and academic integration.

Slide 6: Bridgeport College cares about providing educational access to students from all backgrounds. We have learned that often children of color are diagnosed with ASD later in life. This causes students to miss out on valuable support and accommodations in their education. Bridgeport College values diversity and promotes equity. To ensure we are not neglecting these students, we will be collaborating with the Office of Multicultural Services.

Slide 7: As you can see we are currently assisting students with ASD in a multitude of ways across the college. Please take a moment to review the programs. Are there other supports on campus that you would consider essential to the success of these students?

Slide 8: As many of you have mentioned there is more we can do, which brings us to our proposal, the ANCHOR program. ANCHOR is a comprehensive program that will assist students with ASD in navigating

the waters of college by providing steady support throughout their education here at Bridgeport. The program will be housed in the Office of Disability Services and will focus on transition support in personal, social, and academic integration at Bridgeport. We are aiming to launch this program for Fall 2017, with additional growth over the next 3 years.

Slide 9: ANCHOR will cover the following areas of a student's life.

Slide 10: The foundation of the ANCHOR program is a three-day Pre-Orientation offered to ASD students. The goal of pre-orientation is to allow our ASD students to acclimate to college, prior to the all-student orientation. This will ease transition anxieties, as students will have more time and space to take in information and their new surroundings. In addition, students will be mailed a copy of "Navigating College – A Handbook on Self Advocacy," a book written for ASD students by ASD adults. Students will meet with peer mentors, who will support them throughout the first year, as well as learn how to live in a residential community. Academic advising will occur, and individualized plans and goals for each student will be created. At the same time, parents will gain knowledge of campus resources available to their student. We are excited for the potential this aspect of ANCHOR has to offer!

Slide 11: Our strategic plan for the proposal focuses on three areas: Personal Skills and Support, Social Integration and Community, and Academic Navigation and Awareness.

Slide 12: In order to develop personal skills and support, ANCHOR and its partners will support students with ASD in cultivating self-advocacy and independent living skills, as well as utilizing student interest to connect with on-campus jobs. Research has shown that while parents and families are the best advocates of their children, this changes during college, where students must speak up about what needs they have. Without having the skills or practice in bringing their voice to the table, many needs may go unnoticed and unsupported. Our goal is to avoid that concern!

Slide 13: The Task Force has developed a structure for how we will address the Personal Skills and Support goals, implement our plan, and hold one another accountable on the success and assessment of each segment. What questions do you have about the goals and plans for this area?

Slide 14: To enhance social integration and community for students with ASD, ANCHOR and its partners will focus on two goals. First, we propose creating a peer mentor program, specifically for students with ASD. Peer mentors will ease difficulties in navigating social situations and support students as soon as they arrive on campus for pre-orientation. Likewise, our second goal is to promote a sense of belonging through community awareness of ASD, and additional programming for students to attend. We realize that college transition can be challenging for all, as Chickering and Schlossberg remind us, but that with support, students can succeed and find the right fit.

Slide 15: Mirroring our first pillar of support, Social Integration and Community will be buoyed by four specific goals and adjoining plans of action. We recommend collaborating with a number of departments, beyond those of the Task Force. Again, as a college, we can stay accountable to our goals, and actions as we move forward. Are there questions about the proposed plans of action for this segment?

Slide 16: Finally, we also need to guarantee that our students with ASD thrive academically, so the ANCHOR program emphasizes academic navigation and awareness by faculty and staff. As research shows, students with ASD need additional academic structure and regulation for their schedules.



Regular meetings with academic advisors will establish consistency as well promote understanding of what type of course-load each student can manage. Looking beyond direct aid for students, we realize that our faculty and staff do not always feel trained or prepared to work with students with ASD. We appreciate their honesty and interest in continuing to develop professionally and as teachers for their students.

Slide 17: As the final pillar of the ANCHOR program, Academic Navigation and Awareness will draw in many of our academic partners, including faculty, financial aid, the registrar, and academic advising. We know that knowledge of many will expand the impact of our offerings and hope that you will support this final initiative to ANCHOR.

Slide 18: To bring ANCHOR to fruition, there are three final steps to put ANCHOR into action. In sharing a proposed budget, assessment design, and program timeline, we know that you'll depart from today's meeting convinced and reassured of the value of this proposal.

Slide 19: Given the role of the Task Force in assessing the needs of the community, current offerings, and proposed action plans, we drew up a tentative budget. Please take a look at the budget handout provided. We look forward to continued discussion about what the budget and funding can look like for ANCHOR. Although programs cost money, and money in higher education can be hard to come by, we know that supporting our growing population of students with autism, we will actually reinforce the strength and longevity of our college. Since we value accessibility to education, we believe additional college fees may limit prospective families. By covering the cost of the ANCHOR program, Bridgeport College will be set apart from other programs and can live the example that we are about students first. With the success of this program, we hope to become a national example of how to enable post-secondary success for students with autism.

Slide 20: We also value how data can prove programmatic success, as well show areas of growth and change. ANCHOR includes a range of assessment methods, from focus groups, surveys, and on-going monitoring of program aspects. Assessment must be formative, as well as summative, given our Year 1 results will greatly impact our plans and timeline for Year 2.

Slide 21: You've heard a lot from us today, so let's recap how we'd like to move forward for this year, and the coming years, given your potential approval of this proposal.

Slide 22: Thank you again for taking time to consider this program and opportunity to assist a growing population of students at Bridgeport College. I hope you will take time to consider the ANCHOR program, and the opportunities it provides to the students we serve. As an overview of what we've covered today, please use the one-pager on the back of the budget description. If you have any questions, please contact me at KJB@Bridgeportcollege.edu

